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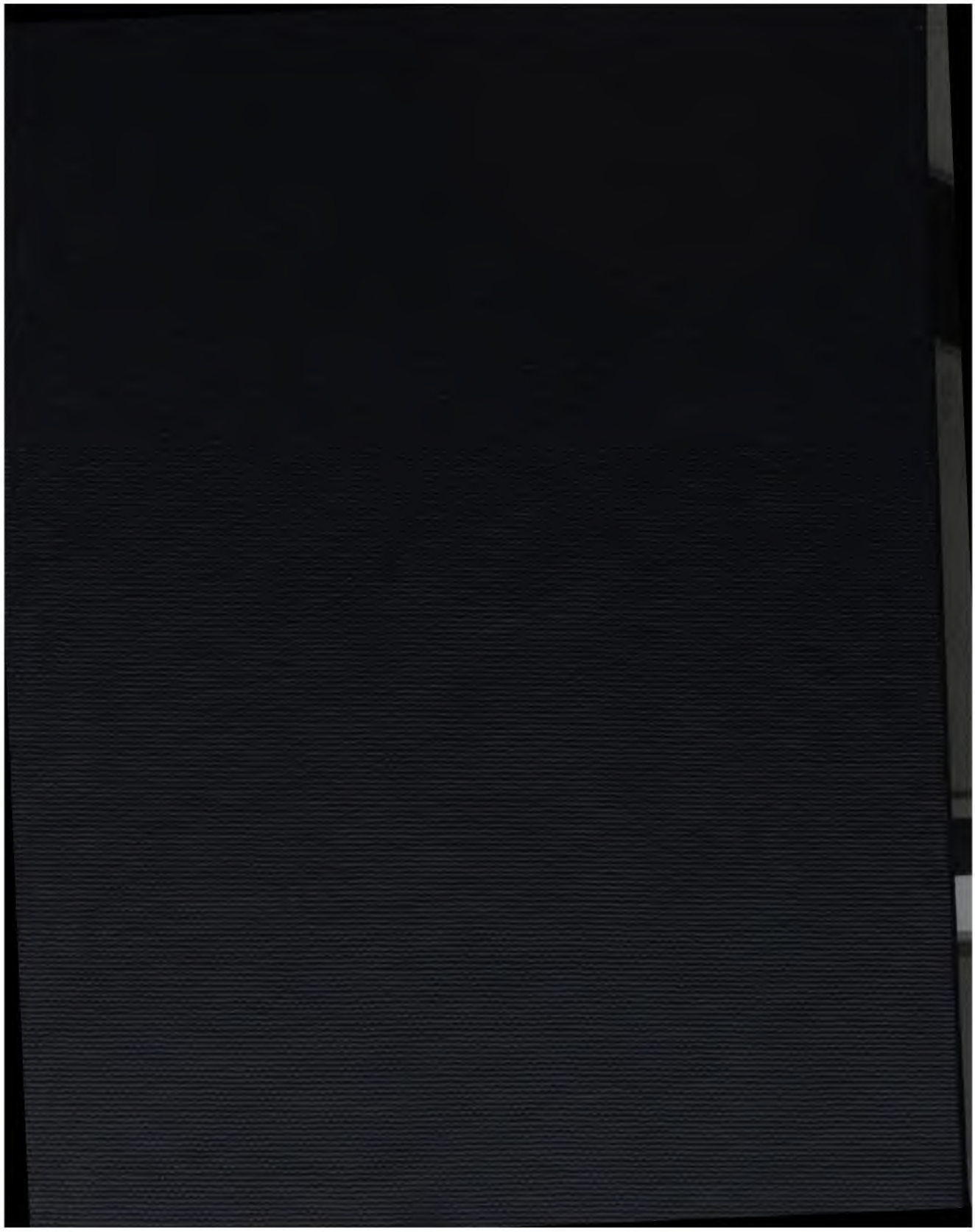

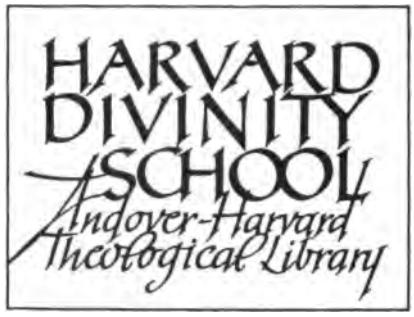
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CHRIST'S POWER, OUR WARRANT AND THE WORLD'S HOPE.

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTIETH ANNUAL MEETING, HELD IN SYRACUSE, N. Y., OCT. 7, 1879.

BY GEORGE F. MAGOUN, D. D.,
PRESIDENT OF IOWA COLLEGE.

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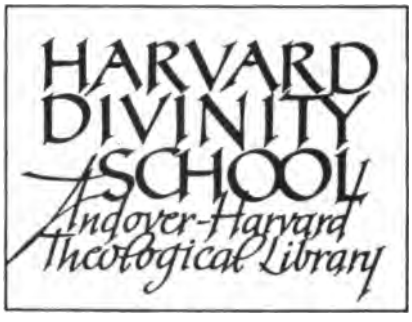
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PRESIDENT MAGOUN'S

Sermon

BEFORE THE

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shall there be to the insight and foresight as to the concealed tendencies of things, or to the prerogative of handling and guiding them, in him who sent a disciple to the lake for a piece of money in a fish's mouth, and bade the disappointed night-toilers cast their net on the right side of the ship? He could not demit this rule on his ascension, or, if he were going to be stripped of it, promise to any purpose to be with his servants alway even unto the end of the world. He cannot to-day walk in the midst of the golden candlesticks by spiritual influence alone. Though there are limits here, indeed, as in miracles, from the nature of the case, this providence of Christ's includes communities and individuals. We read it in the fine text of biography, and in the larger type, the long primer and capitals, of history. Who can tell how completely the incidents of a pagan's life are changed by his hearing the word of the Lord from missionary lips? Who can picture the changes to come in national and international life, when people shall flow unto the mountain of the Lord, saying, "He will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths, for the law shall go forth of Zion." The vaster his interests in the world, the vaster his agency must be to defend and cherish them. Yet both in the unity of his general methods, and in the ends of interposition, the personal element appears, in each removal of obstacles to his work, in every accession of help to the workers, in all unsuspected, hidden preparations for them, in those personal deliverances that startle even faith. And as in all other cases of power or authority, it is disproven by no withholding of its exercise, while one clear instance of its exercise establishes it. There is no mention of his kingship in the gospels but touches the idea of loving care, as of his household or his chosen ones, with the larger majesty and splendor of universal sway. Christendom is what it is only by virtue of divine foresight, love, and choice. And Christ alone accounts for Christendom.

We come to what, perhaps, will be more quickly recognized, in itself and in its personal qualities, when we touch *his intellectual influence upon society*. "My word shall not pass away," whatever else it embraces, and whether the Christian

literature is imperishable or not, predicts a changeless, unflagging mental sway. King in that kingdom which Pilate found it impossible to understand, King of truth, none beside him had ever pretended to be — no founder of a philosophy, no inventor of a religion, not Moses even, who comes nearest to him, and a prophet like unto whom he was to be. Every new comparison of Christ with "other masters" therefore exalts him, both as to the sum and quality of his contributions to our spiritual and moral knowledge, and the marvelous manner in which he rules mind. A German university has an ever growing library of thousands of volumes of Luther literature. Our books *about* Shakespeare and his works prove by mere amount the richness and depth of his genius. Christ hardly enters much of the Reformer's world of thought, though most of it is a circle within his own; into the great dramatist's world it may be said he never set foot; but who shall so much as estimate the intellectual fruitfulness begotten in Christendom alone by his doctrine and his life? Hostile or friendly as literature may be, every day's accession to either sort, and the wealth of allusion to him running through both, even the very tone and form and pressure of the world's recorded thought, swells this fruitfulness. But outside the circles of scholarship and authorship — beyond all books which his encounter with human ideas has created — the common daily speech and thinking of simple souls prove the magnetism of the four gospels alone a peerless marvel in the history of mind. Each passing age must estimate for itself the variety of human gifts which he masters, from the rudest to the rarest and most regal. We uncover evidence in ancient ruins of the moving and shaping forces of olden worlds of thought; thus, if aught so immense and living as Christian civilization could be once buried and then ages hence exhumed, it would disclose to coming men nothing more clearly than the quickening and formative ideas of Jesus. What conception, indeed, shall we construct of his power in the development of God's truth to whom God gave not the spirit by measure, and who was himself in the beginning the Word? But he is no "mere mes sage-bringer," we have been reminded — no simple channel of

communication from the supreme mind, any more than he is in lower realms a mere instrument of force. Had he been a mere teacher, scepticism had never conceded with complimentary iteration in Christian lands to-day, that his influence is "greater than that of all the disquisitions of philosophers and than all the exhortations of moralists," nor would intellectual heathenism crumble before it. He has jurisdiction as to spiritual reality. He commands belief. He spoke with authority both of duty and of truth. It cannot be pretended that this is not a personal power. Say that the intellectual influence of God in his word is that of an ideal being — though great revolutions of mind never come to pass except through a new and great personality — yet confessedly this mental sway of Jesus is that of an actual being. Christian thought, higher and lower, in all lands, finds but one explanation, and that is Christ himself.

One more aspect of his authoritative power on earth crowns all these, for they are but helps and ministries to it, viz.: *its productiveness of spiritual changes.* Merely moral ones are subordinate or included here. Indeed the ethical successes of his religion, were they altogether separable from the evangelical ones, would still be signs of them. "Lower branches" of the gospel tree, they have well been called. You can beget nothing that is to be desired of the twelve beatitudes of Gautima-Buddha, save by first realizing those of the Sermon on the Mount. Let the moral philosophy of the schools, ancient and modern alike, continue to be a chaos — that of Christ is a cosmos of order and beauty. The true "data of ethics" are in his life. No Christian wonders that a heathen teacher in Japan went straightway and bought forty Bibles for his school, when told of the science of doing right, and that Christ's word is the best instruction in it. The "Divine forces of the Gospel" are historic, yet that they are also strictly personal, who can deny? If evolution is true, they are superhuman. What availed the survival of the fittest ever to introduce into this guilty world richer virtues than it even imagined — new religious virtues — and make them bloom and come to fruit on the thorny and withered stem of

human nature? Can genius or natural moral capacity account for such a supreme result as this — lying, as they do, alike behind goodness and sin? Can "enthusiasm for humanity" show after what process Christ vitalizes spirituality and enthusiasm for God? How to deliver men from selfish passion, if thoughtless — how from selfish calculation, if they begin to think of salvation, that is his problem. How to save them from a perverted intellect and a perverted heart enslaving the will — how to impart a faith at once redemptive and regenerative, this calls for a personal power. What could be done with the idea of God to make men spiritually upright, if it were not that of an infinitely and eternally holy person? But this must be made practical by a person. No moral revolutions, above all, without a direct and commanding personal power. And natural selection can never show how his came into the world. Without immense expenditure of such power and beyond the aggregate belonging to all its members, his church had never been builded or so much as founded. We compare it with human influence, so far as sacredly respecting the freedom of its subjects goes; but here comparison ends. By many tokens he signifies that it is coördinate with his supernatural mastery over nature. He blends doctrine, practical precept, and miracle. Men came to hear and to be healed. But this is not all. Only spiritual life can impart spiritual life. Philosophize it into the personal love-feeling excited by the universal love of Jesus, as some do, or into the disclosure of our natural sonship to God, as others do, yet neither of these will answer. For the best men may love the worst, and to make bad men see the Father or the Son as their benefactor simply, is not converting or sanctifying, supremely utilitarian as the world practically is. Indeed, the more shining the beneficence that runs in the channels of natural desire, the more signal may be its failure. And there is a fearful undertone to all the love of Christ, a warning of eternal alternatives, that men hate to hear. Natural faith in human bosoms no better resolves the secret of his spiritual triumphs. As merely personal, under the same conditions as have just been named, this has never in itself secured either

rectitude or character. For the best men may charm the worst into belief, confidence, trust in themselves, nor yet one whit superinduce holiness upon sin. Christ must weld the faith of intellect, natural sensibility, and will with the faith of conscience toward God. His church must be built by a religious legislation, whether it be of materials civilized or savage, that can forestall its degeneration into a mere moral society. And yet its religion must both sustain and refine its morality. It must ethically have antiseptic virtue in itself, as the salt has beneath this valley. The church must be bound to him personally by what will hold with increasing steadness and closeness from age to age, as the family feeling, which perversity so readily overrides, cannot hold men. Deep truth as it is, that God is our Father, and old as the Law of Moses in Deuteronomy, Christ could neither have taught it nor lived it so as to create a Kingdom of Heaven on earth that shall have no end, without more, much more. He must weld law and gospel into one spiritual instrument for progressive conquest forever, sharper than any two-edged sword, such as Buddhism and Mohammedanism, if they *be* "missionary religions," have not; such as Judaism, though it bore the eternal law, had not in such degree. He must beget the love that is grounded in moral sympathy with him, as well as that which flows from gratitude to him. He must reconcile men to God through reconciliation to the high and hard and holy law. He must make command and penalty sure again to the world, along with forgiveness. He must do perfectly that which Moses and the prophets did in measure. The world must see its best benefactor as Lord of all. He must erect a royalty which we can call at once the Kingdom of Christ and the Kingdom of God. The most powerful twofold sentiment that can move man, the union of natural faith with the faith of conscience, of confiding love with the supremacy of duty, he must concentrate upon himself without removing it from God. This only as a divine propitiation for sin can he do. So must he exercise kingly power over all flesh to give eternal life. He must show that he has original right to dispose of men's sins, though they are committed under a perfect law;

and that this right, though in a sense above the law, is not against it — that he has, moreover, love enough to do this, and that this love is of the very heart and essence of the law. And he must dispense the spiritual operation by which men, in the wild, outcast realms of heathendom, or amid the denser and tougher heathenishness of Christendom, are supernaturally inclined to submit to him in this unparalleled character and achievement, and dispense it with the same ease and facility with which he wrought miracles. Never bringing to the front the feelings howsoever tender and generous and deep that are born of naturalism, as some of his own ministry so often do notwithstanding, but those deeper and more generous and tender sentiments that are spiritually begotten — melting all the soul in one rich and supreme experience as it bows and repents and believes — he must charm them into consecration to himself as their dying and redeeming Lord. Making it possible for men to sing the song of *Moses and the Lamb*, he must so move them to aspire to that blessedness, that we can hardly distinguish the personal agency of the Holy Ghost and his own. If you ask the rationale of this, the whole meaning and wherefore of Christian living and Christian hope, the answer is but one, and this is, Christ.

What an accumulation of power and authority is here, in these four realms of its earthly exercise! The earliest form of it, his most extraordinary providence in miracle, is occasional and most rare; as on my journey hither, in the milder western air of the rich plains, among leafy masses yet green, here and there flamed a single plume of fiery color, or a cone of scarlet foliage, or a trunk wrapped in encrimsoned vines. The later forms, our Lord's ordinary and blended sway of matter and mind, it is to be noted, are more multitudinous and continuous in display, as to you who came from homes among the eastern hills the more advanced season had spread along the great canvas of their pictured slopes its wondrous stretches of diversified and uninterrupted splendor. We say, as we study our Lord's rule, it is power made sweet with wisdom and softened by tenderness and love. It is more. *It is the exercise of an ineffable prerogative founded upon them all.*

Yet in any instance, it only shows, not all he does, or can, or will, but in sample what he is able and has the right to do. If, in the dim twilight of his transition time, when there was only the beginning of his mighty works at Cana, John, the forerunner, knew that the Father had given all things into his hand — if, when he had yet seen so little, Peter could aver that as Christ he is the Son of the living God, shall we in this nineteenth century know less after all the facts?

II. Perhaps, now, by having reversed the order of our Lord's statement, we are the better prepared to consider what he claimed also in heaven. What he possesses on earth grows from it. Whoso wields such agencies here must hold proportionate heavenly rank. Yet we are not to infer rashly. Two considerations forbid. The salvation of this world — mighty as it is — forms but a section of the heavenly administration. The mood of our time exaggerates what is human. It would borrow the whole color of God's character from his relations to mortals. It easily forgets that the reason for the Gospel even is not man's worth, but God's love, a greater reason. We must avoid this current habit in studying the preëminence of Jesus in heaven. Moreover, this text comes from truly human lips. There is a human shaping and tone to all Christ's exalted achievements on earth. Will this bar him out of a sway above, or will it enhance it?

Let us note at once that something is due to *his experiences in his humanity as affecting his position on high.* He spoke the text after these experiences had, for substance, closed — between the setting up of his kingdom on earth and his passing to that which he holds in the skies. As he brought deity down, he bore humanity also back. For that he humbled himself, being found in fashion as a man, God also hath highly exalted him. Without human weakness he took with him what fullness and wealth of sympathy, when he returned to the glory he had with the Father before the world was; what appreciation of our conscious limitations and weakness in that in which we should be most strong; what familiarity with our need and ruin and woe! Respecting this ever-imperiled

and tempted race, at least, to whom shall all be put in subjection in the world to come save to him who hath himself suffered, being tempted? Not to lower but to heighten, therefore, if we may so say, his heavenly attitude all was done. Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; and let us then forever dismiss the thought that it is to him any drawback on the side towards deity. It makes the last tribunal affecting to us, but no less impressive, that we are to "see the judge our nature wearing." So of all that comes between now and then.

Then it must enhance the great and solemn grounds of his heavenly administration that there stands, behind it *a completed redemptive work*. The regenerative counterpart alone remains. Before he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high he had by himself purged our sins. He entered in, having obtained eternal redemption for us. To the whole Godhead what had been achieved brought glory unutterable. Therefore in the midst of the throne is a lamb as it had been slain. The high priest who shares in the dominion over souls that must belong in all worlds and all ages to an atoning God, is he who offered sacrifice once when he offered up himself, and cried, "It is finished." If past achievements of imperial potentates do heighten their supremacy and even clothe them with new prerogatives unpossessed before, we must have richer views of what is his on high to-day. That his saints are yet to judge angels may task our comprehension; but this is not to limit his glory as the head of all principality and power who, when he came to save men and make them saints, passed the nature of angels by. What its extent may be, or may not be, over the celestial instrumentalities, we could imagine only by first knowing how they are enlisted in the evangelization of the world. But he to whose prayer twelve legions of them would once have been given, now that he hath become so much mightier than they as he hath inherited a more excellent name, may well have them all, as the Scripture saith, made subject unto him.

He must also have taken with him, when he ascended, *his function of forgiving sins.* Most impressively he challenged attention to the divine ease with which he employed it on earth; it can not be less easy to him now; nor less sure, nor less personal the royal grace. No penitent hears him in audible voice utter to-day, "Thy sins be forgiven thee!" as no saint in utmost rapture ever beheld the form of the Beloved of the Father. But the prerogative cannot be lost. He alone has it who is the Son of Man; the place from which it issues alone is changed. Our old thinkers ascribed to him "absolute ability to prevail with God to be reconciled with man." It is a terser and more touching view that forgiveness *is* reconciliation. The Son of God commits the Father when he pardons. It is an administrative act in either world. It is the act of one who knows what is in man. While here as many as received him he authorized to become sons of God. For this the government was and is on his shoulders. When he ascended up on high he gave gifts to men surely not less than he was wont to bestow on earth. It was after Pentecost, and after much else had transpired, that Peter spoke of him as exalted to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins.

Then, to conduct from heaven *the conversion of the world, begun and progressing*, also involves authoritative power on high. And not less all else that follows individual conversion to every creature of every race, however large and diversified all may be when it is massed together. All this needs his humanity, needs its going with him to the skies, and the earthly part of it demands a heavenly counterpart. Believe these earthly things within his power alone; and it is easy to believe the heavenly things are likewise. And no man hath ascended up to heaven, to make sure of them, but he who came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which was, as he is, in heaven. Every instance of individual regeneration, every great movement of masses of souls towards God, is a stretching forth anew of the arm of the King of saints. Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received

of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, Jesus — this is Paul's way of stating it — *Jesus* hath shed forth this which we, as well as they at Pentecost, see and hear. To create, to cherish, and to rule alone the church, are functions of personal and celestial power. If higher types of Christian consecration and work are to appear in the future, they will be no natural growth of the lower that we see to-day. If God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, and the weak and base and despised, and things that are not to prevail with in conquering this world, the prevailing, conquering use of them is ever in our Master's hands. If the company of them that publish the word is great, it is because the Lord gave the word, and called them to publish it. If laborers press into the harvest fields, it is because the Church is on her knees before the Lord of the harvest praying him personally to send them. O, blessed Master! come the great day when she shall know her privilege and the scope of her prevailing with thee!

And all this goes along with and implies *a potent divine intercession on high, conducted through a human person.* His prerogatives are exercised through his varied offices. Do we seem to have left nothing for intercession with the Father in giving so much to the kingship of the Son? It is not for us to adjust the two. But it is for us reverently to recognize the mighty margin he himself left in the ineffable Triune Sovereignty when he said, "If two of you shall agree as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father." That intercession which he ever liveth to make is a kingly intercession. The two ideas united of old in Daniel's vision of one like the Son of Man who came with the clouds of heaven near to the Ancient of Days, and there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him. David saw him both leading captivity captive and receiving gifts for men. If before the Incarnation the idea of such an intercession was difficult at least; the loving eyes that for eighteen hundred years have been lifted to heaven from earthly spheres and

struggles and toils have been encouraged by the humanity that makes it, if not possible, most sweet; they have been attracted and fixed by the form like unto the Son of Man.

And now what a twofold accumulation of unparalleled and stupendous dominion is here. All personal — in two worlds — how inconceivably glorious the personality. With what insufferable brightness it must burn before the eyes of witnessing and wondering heaven! I am not here to prove it — the personality or the power — but only to remind you of the masses and varieties of proof. Humbly let us confess that in them our eyes have not attained to the beholding of the King himself in his glory, but the mere fringes of his garments. How fit that such authority should be in the grasp of the pitiful and loving, the crucified and ascending Saviour of mankind. How mighty a reason in it for the word to his believing people. "All power is given unto me. Go ye, disciple all nations." How sure our warrant to evangelize! How solid the world's hope! Descending from the heights of so august a theme, may it not be inspiring to note:

(1.) That our Foreign Missions, with their history, are part and parcel of the exemplification, at home and abroad, in all the world, of the "all power" of our Saviour. The record of this Board is a section of the wondrous facts. His jurisdiction, all unearthly, yet earthly, is in itself all his own, but he takes to himself his great power and reigns through his extending church. Well may the question go from the rooms at Boston to all the fellowship of our Zion, "Are we worthy of this?" Our missions are the utmost expression we can yet attain unto of evangelical faith and love for men united together, but they are also among the sacred and crowning agencies of our King. Much of these agencies may be beyond the compass of Christian responsibility, yet heathenism feels only what is within that compass. The true dignity of the missionary enterprise is here. We are humbled betimes by discovering that the gifts that keep its laborers in the field come from a lower consecration than theirs. They contribute an exceptional Christian experience to history.

But more — they bear the jurisdiction of a king over land and sea — they are at the front in his Holy War. Had not Bunyan depicted its strategy two hundred years before this venerable organization began, it would have been interesting to note his place for the missionary brigade in the twofold army of Prince Immanuel. Our brethren bear no miraculous energy or pretense of it, and so more clearly all may see our Lord's rule in the three other earthly domains we have surveyed, which are spreading at their hands through the earth. There is a record of his intellectual and spiritual conquests on the face of the volumes of the *Missionary Herald*, broad and bright, and a running commentary on his providence underneath. "I could tell you ten examples from mere remembrance," said the venerable Schauffler forty years ago to his congregation at Constantinople, "where the hand of Christ was everything but visible to the very eye." As in all other cases of power and sway, any withholding of its exercise fails to disprove it, while one clear instance can establish it. All the successes of the gospel prove competency thereto, not in his followers, but in him. Not by might, nor by power, as men estimate either. The commentators think our text must have humiliated the church on that Galilean mountain, for the whole world is too weak to subjugate one hard and sinful soul, and yet the whole world is to be won. How cheering, then, to the church in such days as this, the measure and the march of its subjugation to Jesus, by Jesus. Through such a Board as this, the Lord of Glory condescends to put forth a measure of his victorious jurisdiction.

(2.) To bring the world to submit to Christ is utterly a work of faith. We infer from his known supremacy to the unknown, from a present part of it to a future whole. But we begin with faith, and we end with faith. We are shut up to faith. So must it be in a great work whose warrant and hope are of faith. Its effects are sensible and conscious enough; itself is ever among things unseen. Yet this faith is intensely and supremely rational. Philosophize about "the enthusiasm of humanity" as accounting for the missionary's zeal and

patience and fortitude — or call him a "God-intoxicated man," like Spinoza — if you will, to explain his sublime indifference to worldly judgments and probabilities, there remains at bottom a plain and sober fact of reason, that he believes not in a mere command, but in its ground and warrant as well. Given the "all power" of Jesus, everything else in this Board follows that is Christian, and who shall say what further? It is remembered of Judson that when others were disheartened touching the Burmese Mission, he said: "Leave me to my task, only look this way again after twenty years." If in faith the Redeemer's followers are to do greater works than his, it must be not in single works but in the mass of results, in that which was left undone at the ascension. No one can surmise how the gospel is yet to affect trade, society, customs, arts. These blend now with the more purely moral and intellectual forces it employs often to their hindering and its own. What is social is the antagonist of what is spiritual, in our churches even, and threatens to fray it away. But that the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, involves nothing save what is in our text. Bengel called it "the sum of the Apocalypse." All secular life touches what is Christian at innumerable points — sadly true it is that this is not enough to Christianize it — it must touch the divine as well as the human. The multitude thronged Jesus, you remember, but virtue went out of him only for one whose faith touched the hem of his garment. If prophecy, analogy, and his word can be relied on, if how far soever the true prayer of faith may go it still falls within the great meanings of these three, then the real wonders of the world's redemption have yet but begun. They tarry in the sky for a more robust faith. There was no warrant for expecting ten thousand Tongaloo converts within three months, when not long ago the Baptist Board were meditating the abandonment of the mission among that people; but there was rational grounds then as to-day for accepting the text. There is a plan in the kingdom of grace larger and more luminous than that of the solar system, though it is our

belief grasps each. The plan of grace involves the accelerating agency of its author and a progressive faith in those who long and pray for its realization.

(3.) We are yet to see agencies in missions more nearly proportioned to the authoritative power of our Lord. He alone can foresee the mass and variety of them. Of many imposing things in history we are sure that they will never employ certain forces of mind, but it is given to no genius to forecast what he will not yet use—scope of science and splendor of eloquence nobler than Paul renounced in the Greek cities —nor how, by the very side of the selectest instruments of a civilization growing more intellectual every hour, he may sweep through his widest and most shining triumphs by touching with his finger the untrained fervor and vigor of rude minds. Our hope of a missionary revival and of a heightened sense of personal responsibility in the churches called Congregational rests on the ultimate fact that all is in his blessed hands. He can overlay these tendencies which all churches exhibit to grow worldly in their judgments and ways, to use their silver and gold for the flesh — with unimagined measures of the Spirit. The residue is with him.

The grounds of our faith point to his doing more than we have yet faith to recognize. Accept the plan of salvation and the incarnation, and logic hangs her head at the slowness of heart we manifest. He is preparing to give faith predominance in the earth. What he can personally do in vitalizing responsibility for gifts to the missionary treasury, large beyond past example, he has begun to show. He has inaugurated for men of wealth a broader and more generous epoch. More wonderful will it be for him to show how the reluctant and still so largely selfish hearts of a multitude of lesser givers can be kept from contracting their gifts because one poor three quarters of a million has come to this Board, after its resplendent moral history for the larger part of a century, unexampled in every form of gain. We open our eyes to the mere germs of possibility which the napkin of lay effort enfolds in that Christendom on whose threshold the aged

arms of a Jewish layman held the infant Jesus — Simeon — all tremulous with joy, for the Holy Ghost had revealed it unto him that he was not to see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ — in that Christendom which presents to us Philip, of the first bench of deacons, bearing the gospel to Samaria and sending it by a queen's secular officer into Ethiopia. At this same brightening moment we gather the first fruits of that sweet consecration of the heart and hand and voice of woman, which began with Anna, the prophetess, coming in that instant when a lay brother announced a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of God's people Israel, and with the four daughters of Philip at Cesarea. And we know not yet what shall be when an army of laymen and Christian women shall fill the whitening fields, relieving those who serve at the altar of so much, and when the kingdom and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the *people* of the saints of the Most High. Our narrow and small notions of the most glorious enterprise in which man ever engaged — and with the most absolute assurance of success ever vouchsafed to any — shall yet be put to shame. Consistently Christ exerts "all power," and the work goes forward as fast as it consistently can. Men are prone to ask: Why is his chariot so long in coming? and get no answer, because, in a sense, it is theirs to supply it — to decide when and how the chariot shall come. He uses his earthly and heavenly power as we — and such as we — make it consistent; as we offer the conditions of its swifter going forth to victory. There will be a day when a little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation, and the Lord will hasten it in his time, step by step, commensurately with the fidelity and large-heartedness of his servants. He shall yet have full possession and use of his own. The reason for the grand missionary precept shall yet be *so* believed, that this shall be really obeyed. The missionary creed is not all told in words like these — by all man's moral ruin the world *needs* to be discipled to Christ, by all the preciousness of Christian life and hope, it *ought* to be — true, indeed, as

they are, most true; nor by such as these — by all valid inference from the gospel's triumphs already consummated, it *can* be, by all the tenor and strength of prophecy it *will* be — true and glorious as are these; but the last word of that creed is another — by the "all power" of Christ *it must be.*

"AND I HEARD A LOUD VOICE SAYING IN HEAVEN, NOW IS COME SALVATION, AND STRENGTH, AND THE KINGDOM OF OUR GOD, AND THE POWER OF HIS CHRIST."

A SERMON

PREACHED BY

REV. J. M. MANNING, D. D.

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD IN LOWELL, MASS.,

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CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND THE SOCIAL IDEAL.

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SERMON.

"AND I SAW A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH: FOR THE FIRST HEAVEN AND THE FIRST EARTH WERE PASSED AWAY; AND THERE WAS NO MORE SEA."—*Rev xxi: 1.*

No man has ever yet doubted that some such blessedness as these words foretell is in store for our world. It is one of the sacred beliefs of the human heart, that the scattered races of mankind shall be one day brought together into a single family. This faith is intuitional; it is born with us, like the faith in our own immortality or in the existence and omnipresence of a God of love. Before the light of the gospel had dawned on men, poets sang of the golden age to come, and philosophers tried to tell what it should be or be like. It is one of the chief themes of prophecy in the Old Testament as well as in the New. The whole Bible, but perhaps more especially the last book of it, is a divine *Amen* to our instinctive faith in the brotherhood of mankind. Through all literature, whether ancient or modern, through all thinking, through all statesmanship, all business, all life, this sacred yearning is breathed; and while the universal voice is going up, saying, "How long, O Lord, how long!" the response of God is clear, full, unmistakable. That belief in the future perfection of man and of human society, which cannot be uprooted in our hearts, does not deceive us. The glorious day to which it turns forward our wistful eyes is surely coming, coming, coming! God keeps the times and seasons in his own power. One day is with him as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. But his servant John, whom he inspired to show unto us what should be in the end of the world, says, "I *saw* a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

By "a new heaven and a new earth" we are to understand the whole race of mankind, morally and spiritually renewed. The passing away of "the first heaven and the first earth" signifies that the present divided and hostile condition of the races of men shall give way to a universal reign of peace and good will. And in the striking picture of a world in which there is "no more sea" is assured to us the mastery of all natural forces as well as all moral and spiritual, so that mankind shall no more be kept from coming together into that brotherhood of love in which they cannot but believe, and for which they instinctively yearn.

The sea offered only images of terror to the mind of those to whom St. John wrote. It bounded the known world. They peopled with direful fancies the regions which lay beyond its distant rim. Meaning by the word "sea" the Mediterranean, with which they were chiefly conversant, it would suggest to them ideas of distance and separation; long and perilous voyages, which would not bring them to friends, but to savage and hostile tribes.

No doubt all these ideas were in the mind of the rapt seer when he used his beautiful image. He is carried forward by the Spirit of God into the time when Christ shall be the universal King. It is the glory and blessedness of that day which his vivid figure paints. He means to say that a time is coming, in the history of our world, when the dominion of man over nature shall be complete, the sea even not blocking the pathways of his love; when he shall regard no place as the abode of mystery or danger; and when that separation, difficulty of access, and hostility which now divide the nations from one another, and of which the sea is a striking symbol, shall give place to an easy, brotherly, and uniformly delightful intercourse among all the inhabitants of our globe.

The march of the human family toward this blessed state began in the dawn of history, and is still going forward. Let me speak to you a little of the means by which the great renovation is to come about: *first*, of some of the natural and human means; *secondly*, of the supernatural, as seen in the gospel, or more especially in the work of Christian missions.

One of the first class of means, which has done much and may yet do something toward bringing our race together into a brotherhood of love, is geographical discovery. Man's knowledge of the new world he had been bidden to subdue and have dominion over was for a long time partial and vague. Each knew his own neighborhood, but there was no common knowledge shared by all. As men scattered abroad after the confusion of tongues, they did not send back reports of themselves, and early traditions grew dim; hence, in a few centuries the Old World was peopled with tribes who knew almost nothing of one another. But in due time journeys, and even voyages, of discovery began to be made. Adventurous men went forth to search out the lands, and they returned to tell what they had found. Thus the small circle of geography, which had been each man's world, began to be widened. The dwellers in Egypt, Syria, and Midian heard that they were neighbors to one another; and they sought intercourse, though chiefly for plunder and blood. The islands of the sea, also, and the remotest parts of the continents, were brought gradually within the circle of this common knowledge. Thus, that vagueness and fear which had been connected with the idea of distance began to yield to a pleasant curiosity and the feeling of society. The shepherd of Mesopotamia felt less alone at knowing that other hearts, precisely like his own, were beating far up the Nile, on the table-lands of China, throughout the wilds of Europe, and on the bosom of that great deep whose terrible majesty filled him with awe. But vastly more toward bringing the earth's surface to the knowledge of all men has been done in modern times. Columbus and his successors robbed the sea of its mystery. The exact form and size of the earth have been found out. Not an islet glitters on the surface of the blue waters but some one has seen and reported it. Wherever man can live, this work of discovery has been done; and now, in the central parts of Africa, and toward the northern and the southern pole, the work is going on, sure not to stop till the last corner, and shore, and hight, and fastness of the earth have been forced to give up their secrets. This genius of discovery ranges the

earth as the astronomer's glass sweeps the heavens. It is rapidly filling up the blanks on our maps. It is giving to all parts of the world a reality and nearness in our thoughts, which tend to take from man everywhere his sense of loneliness or isolation.

Another natural means of bringing men together into fraternal relations has been the establishment of colonies. This adds a tie which mere discovery could not give: the attachment, namely, to a common ancestry. Though every man is our brother, and in the broadest sense we cannot speak of different ancestors, yet there is a peculiar interest binding together those who think of the same country as their fatherland, or who are alike warmed with the blood of some heroic stock whose origin and fame they can distinctly trace. The Phœnician colonies, along the southern shore of the Mediterranean, were drawn to one another as the native tribes could not be; for, with a common affection, they remembered the mother city. So when that migration southward, from the northern border of Greece, began, and the isthmus below Corinth and the islands near its coast were settled by people claiming a common lineage, the new cities entered into fraternal alliances more or less wide, before which the first owners of the soil melted away. And this brotherhood of states went on increasing for a long time, gaining for itself foot-holds in new lands, held together by the belief in their oneness of race. This tie of kindred has steadily grown more powerful as the world has grown older. And it is not impossible that the time will come, in the blessed future opening before us, when all mankind, however scattered abroad, will trace their lineage to a single source; all decaying tribes having wasted away before the one dominating people which turns proudly to a single origin and to a single career among the nations. From the sources of the Amazon, out of the rich valleys of Central Africa and the uplands of Asia, from the sides of the North, the blooming prairie, and the coral islands of the Pacific, threads of tender remembrance may draw all hearts toward a common center of name and traditions.

In the work of reuniting the scattered fragments of human-

ity, commerce also bears a notable part. The arrangement of things in the world is such that what nature and labor produce in one country are taken to other countries for the promotion of the common welfare. Hence the business of carrying — the commerce whose lines run in all directions and cross one another at almost every point of the earth's surface. The ships sailing on the remotest sea are bringing each nation of men into kindly relations with the entire world. An emperor on the continent of Europe dare not begin a war till he knows how it will affect the merchants of Canton, London, and San Francisco. Nothing that makes trade unprofitable, or that interferes greatly with it, will be long tolerated. There are but few nations now which refuse to come into this world-congress of exchangers — this brotherhood of buyers and sellers all over the earth, who control kings, and presidents, and law-givers. It cannot be denied that the Sandwich Islands were the sooner redeemed from barbarism by lying as they did in the highway of the world's commerce. Let any country succeed in opening a thrifty trade between its own ports and the ports of other countries, a trade whose profits are equal to all concerned, and it needs little other warrant that its rights will be respected. The Hottentot can bear no hatred toward the Englishman who takes his ivory and gives him its full value in useful fabrics. The ice-dealer of Bombay is on friendly terms with the New England shipper. The shoemakers of Lynn are interested in the success of the South American hunter. An untimely frost in a Western valley, or a flood in France, or a tribal war in Asia, or the burning of a great city, is often a world-wide calamity. Rich men whose homes are in Paris have been made poor by a drought in New York or Ohio. Places of abode are changed for life — the Turk dwelling in Boston, and the Bostonian in Constantinople; the New Yorker making Shanghai his home, and the Chinaman residing in New York. Thus it is that all nations, both the civilized and the barbarous, make one community; and it is for the interest of each of the individuals so connected that peace and good-will should everywhere exist.

In naming the more obvious means by which the scattered tribes of men have been brought near to each other, the applications of scientific discovery should not be forgotten. The seaports of the Old World are not half so far from us as they once were, owing to the use of steam. And of the telegraph we may say that it has more than annihilated space, both on the land and on the sea. The electric current is swifter than the earth's motion; it steals a march on time; what took place in the far-off Orient, we read of at an earlier hour of our day. This swift-spreading of the news to all points of the earth is a terror to evil-doers. It helps the cause of justice and good-will. There is no place where the worker of iniquity can hide himself save by the connivance of faithless officials. When he steps in disguise on the remotest shore, a warrant of arrest may meet him. Wonderful as all this is, yet who doubts that science has other secrets to declare? Wisdom will not die with us. That torch of inventive genius which the former times have given to us, we shall hand on to those who succeed us. Human ingenuity will not rest till the basis of a world-wide intimacy among men has been laid. It will be because they wish to dwell apart, hated and hating one another, if they fail to come together into an all-embracing brotherhood.

And just here it is, dear friends, that we see the need of an agency which is above nature or man's power, to change the selfishness of the human heart into the spirit of love. That spirit brought down to us in Christ Jesus, and given to his people to be spread through the world, is the only power which can make one family of all the tribes of men. God himself must make the nations one by giving to them his Son. The triumph of the gospel everywhere, and especially in the form of Christian missions, is our only hope that the golden age of love, of which the poet and philanthropist dream, will ever dawn. The spirit of Christ in his church, carrying the life of God to every creature, alone can give the new heaven and the new earth. You will admit that I have not undervalued ordinary causes, as preachers are sometimes charged with doing. In considering how St. John's vision is to be realized,

I have given due credit to discovery, emigration, commerce, and the better control of natural forces. But a great work still remains undone, which nothing in nature or man shows any signs of accomplishing. The union which they bring about is based on self-interest, and is wholly unstable. Another law of action, even that love and self-sacrifice which came down from heaven, must be planted in men's hearts, in order to make them in deed and in truth one family.

Let me show, then, why Christian missions, embodying as they do the spirit of divine love, tend directly to bring mankind together into a single brotherhood.

They proceed on the principle of sacrifice — are a constant laying down of life for the good of others. This is true from the center to the circumference of the work. Starting from each home office, and going out on all sides, we find at every step, and in the farthest mission-field, self-denial and self-sacrifice. There is an outlay of time, strength and sympathy, for which no worldly return is sought or expected. Poor widows give their farthings, and others their larger sums; families live on inadequate salaries, uncounted hours are taken from business, days of prayer and nights of anxiety are spent, and no reward is thought of or desired. It is all bread taken from the mouth at the Lord's bidding, and cast upon the waters, not to be gathered again until the eternal shore is reached. Is it for their own sake, think you, that the young husband and wife, standing on the vessel's deck after the parting hymn has been sung, turn their faces whithersoever the spirit sends them? Is it for any selfish reason that the aged parents, who have reared them so tenderly, watch the lessening sail, and wave their tearful good-bye as it vanishes from their view? Do they find any return, as the world counts dividends, in going back to look at the pictures of their departed children, and to speak their loved names? "Not for our sake, but for the sake of those who know not Christ," is the answer which confounds the selfish man when he asks, "Why this waste?" Follow that little ship's company on the way. Hear them speak of early associations, of the family circle, the school, the friends, the familiar trees about the homestead, the loved streams of

water, the grand old mountains. "What induced you to give up all that peace and sweetness of life amid the glorious surroundings of your birthplace?" we ask. There is a swelling of great emotions within them as they hear the question; and with brimming, yet brave and upturned eyes, they say, "We go to seek those for whom our Lord died." Is it a pleasure to them to be confronted daily with strange, wild faces, to miss the dear mother tongue, to be obliged to preach the blessed words of Christ in an uncouth and inadequate dialect? Look through their dwelling: its furniture spoiled by the heat of the climate, or its walls not able to keep out the wintry wind; greedy insects invading every corner of it, poisonous reptiles crawling over and around it, hungry beasts of prey stealthily watching in the jungle hard by, its table spread with food which only their wish to be strong for their self-denying work can make palatable. "Does this pay?" you ask. "Not as the money-changers reckon pay," they answer. "But we," they add, "have another motive; we are to Christ a willing sacrifice, to be used of him in planting here his saving gospel." Think you that no struggle takes place in them when they are forced to send their children home to be educated? Is it such a motive as you act from in secular affairs, which persuades them to let their families be broken up? which strengthens them to lie down and die alone, beneath the ice-hills of Greenland, on the banks of the Gaboon river, or within the suffocating walls of Mosul? You behold here a new and marvelous power at work in the world; something which is above man or nature, which came from the God who is love. Here is no thirst for fame, glory, or riches, but a longing to be offered up for the good of others. This spirit is not due to commerce, to science, to the finding and peopling of new lands. It is the spirit of the gospel, for lack of which the world has been full of discord. Everything which seemed to favor universal peace and good will has been spoiled by some element of self-interest. But here self is devoted to the well-being of those who cannot repay; and we all see that this spirit, if made everywhere dominant, cannot but bring all men into one brotherhood. It is the same spirit out of which God sent his

Son into the world; and out of which the Son was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. This entire freedom from self-seeking, this eagerness not to be ministered unto but to minister, this lowliness and suffering for the sake of others, which the mighty men of the world have never shown, but which is the spirit of Christian missions, is our only hope of the new heaven and new earth. How can there be any war, or oppression, or other abuse of man by man, where each one is seeking not his own, and no one owes anything but to love his brother? Such a spirit is all-powerful; it tames ferocity, it melts the icy heart, it overawes wickedness. Christ's kingdom, the kingdom of suffering for the good of others, though the least of all seeds in the beginning, is our only reliance if the races of men are ever to become a single family; for nowhere else do we find that self-surrender and toiling for our neighbor's good which are the only possible basis of a real and enduring brotherhood.

But facts, no less than the spirit of missions, show that they can make mankind one family.

The true churches of Christ are already made one by their endeavor to give the Gospel to every creature. Persons interested in the same objects, and having knowledge of each other, are one in heart, however scattered in space. To them there is no more sea, or separating distance; for the electric chain of sympathy makes them one. There is a republic of letters, of science, of art — each world-wide. But these fraternities do not rest on a permanent basis, for they do not grow out of unselfish suffering; the spirit which pervades them is not that of the Gospel. The fellowship of missions is as enduring as the soul of man; it is deep, sweet, tender, beyond the power of anything to disturb. This gentle and pervasive love, whose golden threads go through the world, is revealing itself more and more. When the states and kingdoms are in commotion, hurricanes of war screaming through the sky, this soft melody of Christian hearts is uninterrupted; and if we lay our ear low, and hearken patiently, we can hear its breathings, the faint prelude of a mighty anthem, heralding the reign of the Prince of Peace.

There is another fact of most touching interest, which shows how Christian missions are making all lands one. Almost every Christian, in every part of the world, has some kinsman or near friend toiling on the other side of the globe; or, may be, already sleeping in Jesus, where he fell, on some remote continent or island, or within the still depths of the sea. There are those in New England who think tenderly of St. Helena, of the Isle of France, of the hills of Nestoria, of the widely scattered lands made dear to them by the kindred dust of a Hall, a Judson or a Boardman, a Grant, a Lobdell, a Benjamin, a Goodell, a Scudder, a Poor. These lines of affection, making foreign soil native, go out all ways and to the remotest points; and to the heart which thus loves and communes there is no more sea. You mock it, denying its own sweet witness, if you say that it is not one with its kindred who have died in Christ. It lingers near the burial-ground of Batticotta in the twilight hour, and is soothed by the spicy breezes which blow soft from Ceylon's Isle. It walks through the exhumed palaces of Nineveh, and looks wistfully out on the lowly grave-stones beside the Tigris. It sits beneath the cedars of Lebanon, and hears in the sighing of their branches the voice of its own communion. The cocoa and the palm, though as far as the East and the West from it, are its own trees. For it is the cemeteries, the places where our own kindred sleep, which our hearts specially claim; there we dwell, oftentimes more truly than where we are visibly present. Thus every continent, and island, and valley, and mountain, around and all over the world, is fast becoming father-land and home to the brotherhood of Christian hearts. Our self-love and patriotism are widening into an affection which embraces the world; into that holy and divine love which will not rest from its blessed ministry till the lowest child of Adam has found the tree of life; till all nations are of one heart and one speech, and the soul of a brother looks out from every eye, and to live is to serve, and to labor is to love.

That the spirit of Christian missions is able to do this, is foreshadowed by what they have already done. Whatever they touch, they consecrate and make immortal. Go to Williams-

town, and you will be shown the spot where Mills and his associates met to pray. That spot, more than the college, makes the name of the town dear in all lands. Go to Andover, and they will remind you that there those missionaries studied. Go to Salem, and it will be said to you, "Here the first missionaries were ordained." I have met a ship-master who remembered with pride that the first missionaries to the Sandwich Islands sailed with him. There are thousands of men and women living in the far-off East and on the islands of the sea, who know Boston only as the place from which missionaries are sent.

What marvelous power the Christian missionary has! The memory of David Brainerd is to-day a converting power, and Henry Martyn helps hold the University of Cambridge to the foundations of its faith in Christ. The power of such men is not merely natural; it is supernatural. Their strength may be small, and they may be young and without earthly prestige, yet the life of Christ has through their consecration to him filled them, and by them he speaks, as never man spake, to his brethren sitting in darkness. The poor idolater sees in them a love not born of man but of God, and he gladly takes the message of salvation which they bring him from the Father of his spirit. I doubt not there are some in this assembly who have been welcomed where the ambassadors of no civil power would be safe. Those of us who have read the life of David Livingstone cannot doubt that, if there were a hundred such as he in Africa, a hundred such as he in China, in Japan, a hundred such as he in Turkey, in India, in Burmah, all preaching Jesus Christ as the one hope and King of men, the great multitude whose voice is as the voice of mighty thunderings would soon be heard, saying, "Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

Read the story of Coleridge Patteson, late bishop of the English church at the Melanesian Islands, if you would know what the missionary spirit may do for a man. He was the son of Sir John Patteson, born so recently as 1827, brought up to all the elegancies and costly pleasures usual to the homes of the English nobility. He was a scholar at Eton when Victoria came

to the throne — a favorite of teachers and classmates, and their petted champion on the cricket-field. From this proud school under the shadow of Windsor Castle he went to Oxford, the holy fire of missions already burning in his heart. Upon graduating he turned his back on all the pride and glory of English high life, and went in the spirit of Christ and his cross to as wretched a set of tribes as can be found on the earth. Far to the southeast of Australia, in his little ship which he named the "Southern Cross," he toiled from island to island, devoting his whole earthly fortune to the work — carpenter, mason, gardener, and farmer, cook and seamster and nurse and doctor, student, translator, teacher, catechist, minister; declining to return home, asking that his portion of the estate might be given to his mission.' Thus he bore up through loneliness, against opposition, under disease, till at last, in the freshness of his glorious manhood, the natives who loved him, unfortunately mistaking him for a slave-hunter known to be prowling around, suddenly rushed upon him out of an ambush as he was one day leaving his ship, and took his life before he could tell them who he was. One such heroic life as that is worth a thousand lives dawdled away in luxurious ease. Jesus Christ formed within him made him such a center of attraction, and such an uplifting and purifying power, as promised in a little while to make all those poor savages one fold under the one Divine Shepherd.

If you still doubt the power of this all-devoting love, which is the soul of missions, to tame wild natives and make them one family, read the story of Miss Pattison, "Sister Dora," in the festering dens and hospitals of Walsall, England. It was the missionary spirit which, in that nominally Christian but degraded and wicked city, made her the adored queen whose word was law to the brutal and vicious creatures about her. What a day it was on which she was buried! The confused roar of machinery and the thud and clang of steam-hammers ceased. The chimneys of furnaces and foundries belched forth no flames that day. Only a heavy cloud of smoke lay like a pall on the great sooty town. Wretched toilers swarmed forth by the thousand and ten thousand, their hearts

bowed by the magic power of her all-devoting love as the trees of the wood are bowed by the wind.

Ah, dear friends! the true missionary is clothed with a sacredness which awes the roving child of the desert. His spirit of love teaches the wild Koord to be kind and merciful. His one thought of saving others, at the risk of his own life, charms the Hindoo mind away from superstition and bloody rites. How often kings have besought his good offices, in treating with the savage chiefs whom they would win to friendly alliance. The deadly intolerance of Islam is yielding in the presence of the heavenly love which he brings to it. Chinese exclusiveness levels its walls at the approach of a pure Gospel. Japan, her heart thrilled by the morning beams of Christianity, is sending her brightest minds to be molded by its hand, and these are carrying more and more of the spirit of redemption back into their marvelous country. This missionary work, which all who understand it so eagerly welcome, has already begun to make strange races to be of one heart and one mind. Great is the work which has been already done. Yet the near future gives promise of something vastly greater. God is opening doors into all lands, where eager hands are stretched out to receive the blessing. Let all Christians give to this blessed work according to their resources, and toil in it as they have the opportunity and power, and the day is not far off when the one kingdom which all other kingdoms are to help make up shall be proclaimed. The yearning of the human heart for fellowship with all other hearts shall be met. Every man's love shall find completeness in the ocean of universal love. God, who is all, shall be in all; and this divine indwelling shall make all one; there shall be neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but all shall be one, and shall grow up together into Christ, who is the head.

What occasion have we, dear friends, to doubt that the Holy Spirit, in whose dispensation we are now living, is fully able to renew our entire world? Are we not doing dishonor to his blessed name and office when we say that Christ must again visibly come, take from the Holy Spirit his unfinished

work, and himself complete the bringing together of mankind in him? Is it not enough that the Comforter takes of Christ and shows to men, and convinces them of sin and righteousness and judgment, but must he be thrust out of his office, and Christ do what he has failed to accomplish, before the world can be converted to God? This certainly is not the view which Christ himself gave when he told his disciples it was expedient for them that he should go away, since if he went not away the Comforter would not come. What mean those words, and the greater works than his of which he spoke, if the Holy Spirit is not adequate to all the wants of the church in carrying out our Lord's last command? The nature of the Gospel and the history of its progress thus far ought to convince us that the present dispensation of grace is enough for all the work we are to do. Going outside of the church, in the province of civil affairs, think what a blessed contrast between the present state of things and that which prevailed even so late as three centuries ago! In all domestic legislation and in international law there has been a wonderful advance, and this advance has been a steady approach toward the teachings of Christ. Nations are growing more and more ashamed of anything on their statute-books or in their administration which the spirit of the gospel forbids. Ah, dear friends, we put asunder Church and State, but Christ knows which is his! They were both ordained of God, nor can we say that either of them alone represents the one kingdom into which all other kingdoms are to be absorbed. The present religious sects may fade away, and it may be *some form of civil power*, embodying the spirit of the New Testament, and world-wide in sway, which Christ shall own as his universal church when he comes in the clouds of heaven.

At any rate, whether we study the history of the State or the Church, we find bright proofs that all the aid needed for the conversion of the world is now at our command. You cannot conceive of any more marvelous victories of the gospel under some dispensation yet to come than took place in the apostolic age, than attended the labors of Chrysostom and Augustine, than followed the preaching of the Wesleys,

Whitefield, and Jonathan Edwards. How often we have seen God take men out of the depths of ignorance and want, and with them mightily increase his kingdom, thus shaming our lack of faith in the agencies for good which are already ours! If you think Christ must needs come in some new form of power, in order that the nations may be given to him, what do you do with the story of the Sandwich Islands or of the island of Madagascar? Could the recent history of Madagascar be any more wonderful if Christ were visibly with us? At the beginning of this century it was peopled by a nation of idolaters, skilled in many of the arts and ways of civilized life, but who were so sunk in the vices and crimes of their heathenism that they might have sat for St. Paul's picture in the First of Romans. But to-day, through God's blessing on the work of the English missionaries, they are a Christian nation, with churches, schools, a native ministry, wise laws, social and domestic order, libraries, newspapers; their queen and many of her chief officers devoted servants of Christ. Who art thou that darest to say, "Are there not yet four months, and then cometh the harvest?" Can you imagine any transformation in the future which shall be more wonderful than this? Go to that island, and tell its people that Christ is coming back to our world some day to subdue men under him, and they would not understand you. They would look on you with astonishment. Tell them that the gospel as now revealed is to save only a handful of our race, and they would not take you for a Christian, but for a Hebrew of the Hebrews. They would say that the millennial glory is already theirs, and that they are so blessed in this as not to be able to think of one yet to come. The utmost they can pray for is that the light which has visited them may spread over the world.

Not only do we need simply the power which we already have, but where has any more been promised us? Was it not all given, and pointed to as our warrant for attempting the conquest of the world, in the hour when Christ ascended to the Father? O ye who doubt the present, and who peer anxiously into the future for some new revelation of Christ's power, go out with your risen Lord from Jerusalem to the Mount of

Olives. What does he say as he is about to be parted from you? Does he say that you must wait for his final coming, and only then see his kingdom begin to prevail? No, dear friends. He looks for no new sources of strength to him and his church in the future. But he says — oh, listen to what he says! listen! — "All power IS given unto me in heaven and in earth!" Therefore what? stand gazing up into heaven? whisper among the faint-hearted that we cannot go over and possess the land? preach that our largest success must needs be but partial till this same Jesus is again visibly with us? No, dear friends; not this, nor anything like it, but something very different from it! "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, therefore GO — and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I AM with you alway, even UNTO the end of the world."

A SERMON

PREACHED BY

REV. A. J. F. BEHRENDS, D. D.

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD IN ST. LOUIS, MO.,

OCTOBER 18, 1881.

COUNTING THE COST.

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD IN PILGRIM CHURCH,

ST. LOUIS, OCT. 18, 1881.

BY REV. A. J. F. BEHRENDS, D. D.,

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SERMON.

"FOR WHICH OF YOU, INTENDING TO BUILD A TOWER, SITTETH NOT DOWN FIRST AND COUNTETH THE COST, WHETHER HE HAVE SUFFICIENT TO FINISH IT? LEST HAPLY, AFTER HE HATH LAID THE FOUNDATION, AND IS NOT ABLE TO FINISH IT, ALL THAT BEHOLD IT BEGIN TO MOCK HIM, SAYING, THIS MAN BEGAN TO BUILD, AND WAS NOT ABLE TO FINISH." — *Luke xiv: 28–30.*

IT is often said that where there is a will there is a way. Nor can it be doubted that the failure, or partial success, of many a life is largely due to feebleness or intermission of resolute determination. But the will is none the less under law, and where that law is not consulted and honored the will is not permitted to have its way. Wisdom is the appointed highway along which the will must press to its goal. A man's aims may be high and noble, and his devotion may be pure and entire, yet may he bitterly fail from simple neglect of having measured all the obstacles; falling before assaults whose vigor and number he had not anticipated, and for which he had neglected to make the necessary preparation.

Every wise man, therefore, counts the cost. But from this it does not follow that he only is a wise man who counts the cost before he chooses, who compels obligation to wait on prudence, who makes his decision of what he shall do dependent on a survey of the difficulties to be encountered and the sacrifices to be borne. Counting the cost is with some men the confession of cowardice; with others it is the disclosure of undaunted heroism. The noblest men are they who so count the cost as to hold themselves ready to devote time, fortune, and even life, to the cause they freely and heartily espouse. Moses counted the cost in this heroic spirit when he turned from the courts of the Pharaohs to share the fortunes of an enslaved but chosen people. Paul

counted the cost when he became a Christian disciple and a preacher of the gospel to the Gentiles. Jesus Christ counted the cost when He bowed His shoulders beneath that burden whose awful weight was crushing a race. The martyrs, in ancient and modern times, counted the cost when they sealed their testimony in their blood. Such a counting of the cost is the only one to which Christ summons us, as plainly appears from the preceding and following statements, in which the duty enjoined is that of immediate, intelligent, deliberate, unqualified, irrevocable surrender. The twenty-seventh and the thirty-third verses of our chapter supply us with the key to the true meaning of the included illustrations. They were preceded by the declaration that no man could be Christ's disciple who was not ready to bear the cross; and their application is given in these significant words: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Here is the inspired commentary of our text. This is the spirit in which we are to count the cost and build, measure the resources of our enemy and vanquish him. The dearest associations must be cheerfully sundered, the heaviest burdens must be freely and gladly borne, if necessary. We must give all, ourselves included. Only such a service does Christ want; only such a one can He bless. He must have all, or He can make use of nothing; and that, not because of His imperious wilfulness, but because our lives cannot reach their utmost vigor and their highest usefulness unless and until His will has everywhere and always its way.

It has fallen to our lot, dear brethren, to be summoned to a service in which no reservations are permitted or possible. Neither Alexander, nor Cæsar, nor Napoleon, dreamed of such an empire as that to whose establishment Jesus Christ calls us — an empire of truth and righteousness, resting on the free acceptance and hearty love of its subjects, including all nations, enduring forever. If Napoleon's dreams of empire impoverished France, we may rest assured that the Church of God has neither treasure nor talent to spare. And, therefore, should we diligently count the cost, not with the reserved de-

termination to abandon a task apparently too great for our execution, but in order that our will may work along the lines of a wisdom that is never baffled, because it is never surprised, and that we may bring within easy reach, and use with the utmost energy, each and all the means at our command.

Let us glance, then, first of all, at the difficulties that must be encountered and overcome by the Church of Christ in the world's evangelization. I can do no more than very rapidly to mention them, condensing in a few sentences what might properly claim volumes in the minute description.

These obstacles are found in the native depravity of the human heart — an enmity original, subtle, persistent, cumulative — whose removal can only be secured by a change so mighty and superhuman as to be called the "new birth;" in the bad conditions of life that are the heritage of centuries of sin; in the great and compact mass of customs, institutions and philosophies, enlisting the pride of nationality and scorning intrusion; in the gigantic social vices that corrupt society at home, disgrace the Christian name abroad, and paralyze the arm of Christian endeavor; in the tenacity of national habits and the power of national traditions; in the scorn of false learning and the pride of great names; in the stealthy, but sleepless, vigilance of Roman Catholicism, with its fixed policy of invading every Protestant mission field, and in the painful violations of Christian comity by representatives of Protestant communions, creating distrust and disaffection; in the stagnation of the Greek communion, as stolid as it is stationary; in the hard formality and corruption of the degenerate remnants of ancient churches in Asia and Africa; in the bigotry of the Moslem, ruling many of the fairest portions of the globe, dominant in all the lands of Bible story and of primitive Christianity, trained to the utmost scorn of the gospel by the traditions of a thousand years; in the seared moral nature of the Mongolian, steeped in centuries of practical atheism; in the extreme animalism of millions of our race; in the horrors of the slave-trade, maintained in the face of the united protest of Christendom, and causing the native

African races to regard every stranger as an enemy, a traffic whose prompt and stern suppression must accompany, if not precede, the Christianization of the Dark Continent; in the jealousy of nations and the selfishness of trade, with shot and shell plowing a highway for its products through the heart of a protesting and suffering people; and last, though by no means least, in the unseen powers of darkness, under the leadership of Satan, father of lies, and destroyer of souls from the beginning.

For, interpret the third chapter of Genesis as you please, reading it as sober history or as pictorial and poetic representation, the Biblical solution of an extra-mundane and antehuman origin of sin is the most reasonable. Sin exhibits a violence and reveals itself in methods of assault that argue its intrusion into the field of human history from a sphere beyond the reach of our observation. For one, I cannot read my Bible, and deny or doubt the personal existence and living hostility of Satan. Our Lord's personal conflict was not only with the moral obstinacy of the man, but with the subtler and fiercer enmity of the Prince of Darkness. He was tempted of the Devil. He rejoiced over Satan's fall. So speaks the record. Peter was the object of a Satanic sifting. An invisible agency is represented by Paul as at work intent on the destruction of man. We are exposed to the wiles of the Devil. To reduce all this to rhetorical impression, or to personification, or to an innocent accommodation to traditional doctrine, is to riddle the Bible of its honest significance and worth for ordinary readers. And for one I cannot resist the impression that the whole history of man confirms the scriptural representation, and bears testimony to the awful reality of a Satanic agency and leadership. We need not go to the length of some of the ancient fathers, so deeply mastered by this conviction, as to maintain that the heathen deities are the representatives and embodiments of demons; that all heathen worship is Satanic in its inspiration and results; that all heathen virtue is thinly disguised vice. The heathen do grope after God. But their history and bondage are marked by

such strange and contradictory features, such aberrations and excesses in worship and in conduct, as to point to causes both known and unknown, natural and supernatural, visible and invisible. The delusions that have swept over them and poisoned their blood seem to have come from regions beyond them; they are the footprints of an army that the eye has never seen, whose footfall has been unheard, and whom the sword cannot reach. As in Kaulbach's famous mural painting of the battle of the Huns, the bitter contest of the day is renewed by the spirits of the sleeping warriors in the dead of night and in mid air, the ghostly Attila borne on his shield, with scourge in hand, hasting to smite Theodoric, so is our earthly campaign only section and symbol of a warfare that stirs all the heights and depths, and where the clash of arms, though unheard, is fierce and unceasing. An army must move in concert, and the work of no division is complete until victory has swept the whole broad field. The face of the earth can be renewed only as the entire universe shares in the regeneration. Subtler forces than any we can measure, or even attack, complicate the problem of a world's conversion and retard its achievement. No holiday task is ours when we talk of reducing the world to the obedience of Jesus Christ. That sums up the problem of all the ages. No greater prayer ever fell from human or angelic lips than that familiar to us from childhood, a prayer of only three short words: "*Thy kingdom come!*"

I have summarized and made prominent the difficulties of our task, not by way of discouragement, but to emphasize the amplitude and sufficiency of our means of conquest. They who are with and for us are more than they who are against us.

And, first, let us clearly, constantly and gratefully recognize that the purpose of the world's redemption has its seat and throne in the eternal love of God. The prayer we lisp is sublime because the living thought of Jehovah is in it. If the missionary spirit were the fruit only of the ripest thought of man, or of his most generous sympathies, it might be doubtful whether it carried sufficient momentum to overcome

all the resistance enlisted, and on its overthrow to establish the fair rule of righteousness. But against all such doubt we are fortified — yea, lifted high above it — when Paul declares, in the Epistle to the Colossians, that it is the pleasure of the Father, having made peace through the blood of Jesus Christ, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself; or when it is affirmed, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, that the mystery, or secret, of God's eternal will is this: "That in the dispensation of the fullness of time, He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth." Here, brethren, is the secret that rules the stars, and before which the ages must bow. This living thought of God is the philosophy of history; and we have hope for the race because grace is on the throne. The fulfillment may seem to be very distant, and the night may seem to gather darkness; but, as in the bitter days when the frost-king rules, and his icy hand palsies all the rivers and strips all the trees, beneath the surface and in hidden chambers flowers, foliage and fruits are safely sheltered, and even tenderly nursed, destined after a few brief days to transfigure the earth anew into a paradise, so surely is God at work, pushing His new creation, giving embodiment to the eternal purpose of His grace in Jesus Christ.

Let us grasp the high meaning of the declaration that grace reigns. Physical science has made us familiar with the idea that the reign of law is universal, and that a solitary exception to its rule would be an unspeakable calamity. Older, deeper, and more majestic than this conviction of physical order, is the conviction of an absolute and universal justice, the reign of an impartial and stern righteousness, incapable of evasion or bribery. This profound conviction dominates all literature, ancient and modern, and gives to human life both its tragedy and glory. For, as Bishop Butler has so well said, if conscience had only might, as she has right, she would rule the world, and as it is, when her right is ignored and defied, the consequent misery and remorse are a terrible vindication of her indefeasible authority.

But neither physical order nor moral law exhausts the secret of God's purpose. Grace reigns; the purpose of redemption, not by violation of natural law, nor by compromising and depreciating righteousness, but by making both agencies in securing a higher and more glorious result. The transfiguring energy of grace is the secret both of natural and of moral law. Therefore is it said that even the material creation waits in earnest expectation for the manifestation of the sons of God, and that God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. There is something more in God than a passion for order, or the quality of retributive justice; and there is something more than these in the work of His hands. Love is the most glorious name He bears — a love creative of order, and always promoting righteousness — but filling all law, not merely with punitive, but also with redemptive energy. Grace, equally with order and righteousness, is crowned and sceptered. The cross of redemption, as the theologians say, is older than the Decalogue, or the misty void of which was born the beauty of the Cosmos. At the heart of nature, as the secret of all her manifold and complicated movements, and at the heart of human history, is the living purpose of the Divine benevolence. It is no less unscriptural and mischievous to represent grace as optional, intermittent, or even limited, while righteousness is regarded as necessary, eternal and universal, than it is so to conceive of grace as to rob righteousness of its eternal honors. The righteousness of God is always and everywhere more than the rigid exactness of retributive justice; and the grace of God is not a sentimental goodness that excuses sin; nor is it so mechanical in its administration that the moral freedom of man is resolved into a name. God neither surrenders His justice to His grace nor His grace to His justice. In Christ all things are to be profoundly and eternally reconciled, but only through the mediation of a righteousness graciously communicated, voluntarily and vitally appropriated. Universalism, therefore, errs when it interprets this restoration as outward, mechanical, and compulsory, rather than ideal and ethical. For the lost, in Scripture,

are represented as being "without," severed from the living, fruitful organism. The tree remains, unimpaired in its essential and complete vitality, though the withered branches be committed to the flames; nay, its vigor, fruitfulness and beauty are greatly increased by the pruning. The dead branches are not a part of the vine, but an ugly and injurious incumbrance upon it. In this sense is there to be a salvation of the world; not of all who once belonged to its numerical constituency, nor merely of very many of its individual members, but of humanity as an ideally unbroken and indissoluble unity, and in its historical completeness; just as a nation may not only retain the integrity of its political existence, but possess it in richer and growing fullness, though thousands fall in a war of resistance and thousands more remain permanently under civil disabilities. Grace reigns through righteousness, and will have its glorious way in a transfigured creation and a redeemed humanity. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, and the Devil's claim thereto is false, fraudulent, and hollow. I have not discounted the difficulties of our task, but multiply them a thousandfold, involve the whole creation from its very dawn, and in all its spheres, in the antagonism; yet if grace reigned in the creative thought and word, that reign cannot be thwarted nor broken. Jesus Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, because that travail of grace is the oldest and the mightiest of all the forces in the universe of God.

But grace works with fitting instruments. The gospel we are commanded to preach matches the grace which it proclaims, and which is our inspiration. We have a message that, in spirit and contents, addresses itself to the unbiased reason and the healthy conscience. The Westminster Confession of Faith contains nothing more admirable than its summary of the evidences establishing the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, in which the secondary place is given to the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole, while it is declared that "our full persua-

sion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Ghost, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts." The gospel compels recognition and acceptance in advance of personal experience, as really and inevitably as does the light of heaven before we have walked under its guidance. We do not believe in that light because we have tried it; rather do we try it because we believe in it. Robertson reports how once, on a journey up the Rhine, he made the acquaintance of an intelligent and brilliant but skeptical young Frenchman, and as the conversation drifted into religious subjects, the preacher avoided the apologetic tone and emphasized the contents of revelation, when suddenly his hearer exclaimed: "It is a beautiful faith!" What the world needs is the gospel, not the evidences of the gospel. The congruity between man and the Bible is perfect; and there is no better evidence of its divinity than its pure and perfect humanity. It is a faithful mirror of human life in its bondage, its painful contradictions, its universal restlessness. Its moral precepts compel recognition, and the good news it proclaims is adequate and grateful. Carry the Bible where you will, it makes its own way and "finds" men. The fall has not modified nor broken either the moral government of God or the essential nature of man. The deepest apostasies, the foulest abominations of heathenism, cannot destroy the moral nature, extract the sting from an accusing conscience, and secure peace to the wicked. Even Felix trembles when Paul preaches. Here is the *pou sto*, the living fulcrum, securing the natural leverage for the world's conversion. This makes it possible and reasonable. Christianity needs only to expound the moral law, and proclaim the gospel of forgiveness to compel a hearing and draw the hungry to her feast. No criticism can discredit the Sermon on the Mount, and the third chapter of John's Gospel.

Experience has taught us that the high morality and intense spirituality of the New Testament constitute no obstacle to the evangelization of the rudest races. It has been main-

tained by some that the progress of civilization is largely dependent on colonization, to be achieved by the dominance of one great race pushing the weaker tribes to the wall and gradually supplanting them. To the Anglo-Saxon, we are told, belongs the dominion of the world. The Indian must disappear, and it is an unscientific sentimentality that prolongs his stay. The Chinese must retreat and vanish. The races of Central Africa must give way. Asiatic and African nationalities are effete, their demoralization so deep-seated and incurable that the only hope of these great continents is in the gospel of emigration. I confess that I tremble before this appeal to pride of blood. This theory is only a new form of the old dream of a world-empire in the hands of a single fortunate and favored race; and on that dream of ambition God has written, in history, His judgment of fire. Nimrod dreamed of it, and the dispersion followed. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of it, and he reaped a harvest of insanity. Alexander dreamed of it, and he died in a debauch. Cæsar dreamed of it, and fell by the hand of an assassin. Charlemagne dreamed of it, but his empire fell apart when his strong hand was withdrawn. Napoleon Bonaparte dreamed of it; Waterloo and St. Helena were the answer. Babylonian, Grecian, Roman, German, Frenchman, successively heard the call to universal dominion, and deemed it the call of God; but the vision melted away and left the eager pursuers disgraced and humbled. And the Anglo-Saxon has no such call. He will be honored of God only as he seeks his power in unselfish and universal service, provoking and helping others to achieve for themselves what he has secured for himself. It is an infinitely nobler thing, more honorable to God and man alike, to Christianize the world than it would be to Europeanize or Americanize it.

And the history of missions shows that no race is beyond redemption. Prof. Rawlinson, in a recent article on the "Prospective Civilization of Africa," quotes approvingly from a living French writer to the effect that "the preaching of the gospel is capable of becoming the most active principle in

the regeneration of the African nations. History shows that Christianity possesses a power peculiar to itself for drawing uncultivated races out of savagery and enabling them to mount rapidly the first stages of civilization." This testimony rises to palpable demonstration when you read of what the gospel has done for the "most debased branches of the human race," fetichists and cannibals, in Australia, New Zealand, New Guinea, the South Sea Islands, that standing miracle of Christian evangelization, the Sandwich Islands, and "the crown of the London Society," Madagascar. Christian missions have won their most signal triumphs among the tribes and races that a worldly wisdom had come to regard as hopelessly debased and doomed to extinction; and it is fair to measure the power of any system by what it can do for the least hopeful of its subjects.

Nor ought we to forget as an encouragement to our confidence and devotion, that Christian faith has become established in the great literatures and the beneficent institutions of a Christian civilization. The gospel is not only an agency of personal renewal; it has become a living, historical force, claiming recognition in the industrial, mental and moral superiority, and in the political dominance, of the nations that have received it. The material benefits of Christian civilization are rapidly commanding universal attention; while the spirit of emulation is waking the most drowsy of races. But you cannot have the fruit apart from the tree; and nations will learn that stern lesson of history. Civilizations are not made to order; they are born and grow; they are the index of a nation's mental and moral life, and only as that life is cleansed and enriched can a higher civilization supplant a lower. Japan and China may want our factories, and schools, and railways, and telegraphs, and homes, but they cannot have these and keep them unless they appropriate and assimilate the living thought on which these are fibred. Christian ideas must be regnant if Christian products are to be enjoyed. Every steam-engine exported becomes the prophet of a new dispensation. Every bar of railroad iron fastened

down imperils social and national alienation. Every yard of our fabrics is a lesson in Christian civilization. Now it may not be very complimentary for a man to be converted through his pocket-book; it is none the less true that in many cases Christianity has received support on no higher ground than that it is conducive to order, thrift and prosperity. The churches help the bankers, and therefore many a banker supports the church. Your shrewd and sensible politician is never an atheist by profession, whatever he may be in practice, for he well knows that religion is the main support of the State. It may be that nations, as the greatest of all corporations, have no souls and are supremely selfish; but the carnal ambition for material enrichment and advance will prove the entering wedge for a nobler national life. When men travel in the same car and share in the advantages of trade they cannot avoid comparing their opinions, and in a free comparison the best are sure to win. The world is becoming more and more compact. Railway and telegraph are annihilating space and time. Seclusion is becoming more and more difficult, and will soon become impossible. The world is rapidly becoming a huge crucible, with the fires at white heat. All things must submit to the fierce testing that has already begun. There is coming, there has already begun, a struggle for existence between opposing civilizations, and the fittest is destined to survive. Once did Christianity measure swords with the civilizations of Greece and Rome, and the cross conquered; once more that conflict must be renewed on a broader field, and the second victory will be the last.

But here two questions confront us: What is the fittest? And what assurance is there of its survival? Can I determine what is best and highest only by the issue? Can I decide what is fitted to survive, only by the fact that I see it survive? Then I can never know the best in advance, and adjust my life to it, because all history has its ebb and flow, and I must wait for the end of the world to show me what is best. In the meantime moral life must be suspended; I can only abandon myself to the drift and tendency of my time.

But if the best and highest be a living and authoritative revelation, commanding the sanctions of the universal conscience, what living provision is there in human history for its conquest? The best ought to prevail; but how do I know that it will prevail unless I have some evidence that it has prevailed and does prevail? In other words, the final cause of history must also be its first and formative cause. The outcome of all history must be history's living heart, the creative and controlling spirit of all the ages.

What evidence is there that this central place belongs to Christianity? You will point me to the ancient prophets who, as Isaac Taylor says, are the masters of modern thought, from whom we have caught the spirit of high hopefulness and of undaunted aggressiveness. But do we simply occupy the prophetic ground, or have we passed beyond the ancient seers, beholding what they did not discern, so that prophecy has become a pledge? Even ancient prophecy had its visible historical ground and warrant in God's dealing with Israel, of which it was only an interpretation; and now that the theocracy has vanished, what living assurance have we that all the hopes it created and fostered have not also vanished? We make a peculiar claim for Christianity, a claim whose familiarity blinds us to its audacity. We decline for it an honorable, even the highest, place in the pantheon of the world's religions; we will not hear of its throne and scepter being shared with Confucius, or Sakya Mouni, or Mahomet. We insist on its original, exclusive, universal, eternal right to sovereignty. Is there any historical warrant for so sweeping a claim, or must we be content to base it on the peculiar excellence of the Gospel, or on the prophecies of the Bible, or on the command of Jesus Christ? What is the Christian answer? What is the answer of the New Testament?

The resurrection of Jesus Christ has changed prophecy into history. That is the living argument and pledge of the world's ultimate and universal regeneration. Initially and constructively, that resurrection is the world's redemption. Explain it as you will, the person of Christ is the center of

the world's life. It marks the death of the old, and the birth of the new. Call the resurrection a fiction, if you will, the dream of Mary Magdalene, that resurrection has proved the world's inspiration. The early preachers proclaimed Christ as the Risen One, and on that living conviction they founded the Church. Primitive Christianity planted her standards by the open and empty grave of the Crucified, and thence marched to the conquest of the Roman Empire. The most remarkable movement of the Middle Ages, enlisting kings and beggars, setting the world on fire, breaking up the stupor of centuries, preparing the way for commerce, the revival of letters and the great Reformation, from which modern history dates, was due to an intense and widespread enthusiasm to recover the empty grave where our Lord was buried. Once more, in our day, that sepulcher has become the altar of the Church. We are not ambitious to supplant the Crescent by the Cross, as the symbol of an external and empty triumph. For we need to remember that the sanctity of that unknown tomb is bound up with that of the whole earth, with the redemption of all the nations for whom that tomb was hewn and rent. Redeem the world and the great crusade is accomplished. And on the morning when that grave was rent, if Christ be indeed Christianity, not only the founder, but the living energy of our holy religion, Christianity became the all-conquering force of history. When our Lord had abolished death in His own person, redemption was no longer a problem or a prophecy, but a fact. The first Easter of human history was the dawn of the millennium. The mustard seed has been planted, and is growing. The leaven lies at the heart of the meal. The year of jubilee has come. *Christ is risen!* That is the great rallying cry of the Church of God. Let us proclaim it to the ends of the earth; for He who conquered death has a divine right to a world smitten by its curse.

It seems only yesterday, though three weeks have passed, that we yielded to the earth its claim to the mortal frame of our late lamented President. Sorely did we feel ourselves to

be smitten, and the burden has not yet lifted from our sorrowing hearts. No sick-bed in the history of the world has been so sacred a temple, toward which the people turned their faces as they prayed, as that in the cottage by the sea; and no death of mortal man has been such a rebuke to sectionalism and partisanship, and so eloquent a charge to a nobler and purer patriotism, as the death of him whom the sea sang to sleep. Let us hope that this baptism of suffering and tears, by whose holy chrism every brow has been touched, has joined in living and undying fellowship those whom the sword had severed. Be that grave by the stormy inland sea the Mecca of a new devotion, to which all the great land shall turn to swear fresh allegiance to our common country. But Jesus Christ, my brethren, died for the world, and that death is honored only as by its memory and might the world is brought to Him. And we have yet a more wondrous talisman of power. The grave where His body was laid has been empty ever since the third day of its burial! The earth closed over him, as it did over our late chief. But soon its mighty heart, on which the millions have been laid to sleep, felt a strange, joyful stirring. It was the pulse of life beating against the stony ribs of death. The chains flew apart, the prison walls trembled, the heavy doors were burst through, as the Lord of life and glory came forth. My brethren, what a ruin was that! What a toppling of the principalities and powers of darkness! And the ruin has never been repaired, nor will it ever be. No gloom has the grave henceforth for the believer, since the glory of that resurrection has transfigured it. It is the open gate to heaven. And the earth that bears upon her heart the seal of such a triumph can be destined for nothing less than a conspicuous share in her Lord's eternal glory. The risen Christ is the living prophecy and pledge of a world's redemption. By that sign we conquer!

Shall we stop here? Not if our inventory is to be complete. In the Book of Acts, which has been called "the gospel of the Holy Ghost," the day of Pentecost is closely associated with the day of Resurrection. The isolated fact

hereby proved its universal energy. The new dispensation is preëminently that of the Spirit, not as if He had not wrought before, but that by the resurrection and ascension of Christ the way was fully prepared for His varied and peculiar ministry. The new dispensation may be said to have its base in a conquering Christ, and its historical inauguration and living inspiration in the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The Pentecostal miracle, it has been well said, "was not merely transient, but is continuously renewed. It is not a rushing sound and gleaming light, seen perhaps only for a moment, but it is a living energy and unceasing inspiration. It is not a visible symbol to a gathered handful of human souls, but a vivifying wind, which shall henceforth breathe in all ages of the world's history; a tide of light which is rolling, and shall roll, from shore to shore, until the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

The Church, then, has an indwelling, invisible, invincible, infallible leadership. A mightier spirit than man's moves in the prayers of saints and the devotion of good men. The deepest heart within us does not always pray as do the lips, and our wants are often the reverse of our wishes; but Christ passes beyond the word, and makes articulate in His intercession the real need, whose supply is never wanting. And as He breathes His infallible interpretation through our faulty and halting speech, so He makes His wisdom to brood over all our thought and care, as we take counsel about His kingdom. He guides the church by His Spirit as well as by His Providence, pushing back the bolts and opening the doors, providing opportunities and preparing us meanwhile, anointing the prophets and sealing their labors. Our thought grows painfully intense, our prayers gather holy violence, our hands are strained to the utmost; and it always will be so, for it is our only salvation to be thus occupied and burdened; yet into our thought enters a wisdom, into our hands steals a power, that is not of earth. It is the wisdom, the travail of soul, the might of our great and living Head.

All build wiser than they know. Not Paul, nor Luther, nor

Knox, nor Edwards, leads the Church; but the Holy Ghost elects and ordains, appoints and establishes. Did Stephen dream how his words and martyrdom would burn their way into the soul of one young man, who should fall only after thirty years of service, and when Christianity had been completely emancipated from bondage to Jewish legalism? Do you suppose Paul imagined what he was doing when he preached from Jerusalem to Rome, and wrote his burning epistles? Did Luther suspect what reverberations his hammer would cause, how memorable would be that walk of less than a mile from his home to the grim castle-church? Did Wesley know what a fire he was kindling when he prayed at Lincoln College, Oxford? Did Robert Raikes dream what forces he was setting in motion when he began his humble work in Gloucester? Did Samuel Mills, Gordon Hall and James Richards anticipate that their retired prayer-meeting would grow to the dimensions of the American Board, and prove the crowning glory of Williams College? And who will dare to prophesy what our children's children shall see? Who guides the church? *The risen Christ, by the Holy Ghost.*

There is power in heaven and there is power on earth. Above, Christ is represented as interceding and ruling; on earth, responsive to that intercession and kingship, the Spirit moves all creation with unconscious travail, and the hearts of saints with unutterable prayers. With such a presence filling the spaces and shaping the centuries, what need have we to fear? Can there be any other issue than the glorious and eternal triumph of Christ's kingdom over the hatred of men and the wrath of devils? What foe can resist an army recruited at the call of God's grace, equipped with a message that is a double-edged sword, fitted both for wounding and healing, guarding the trophies won from a hundred hard-fought battle-fields, under the command of a captain by whose personal assault the enemy's center has been broken, his citadel captured and his forces shattered, led by a secret wisdom incapable alike of surprise and fear? *Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Jehovah's*

judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, for in them God is known for a refuge. Lo! the kings were assembled; they passed by together; they saw, and so they marveled; they were troubled, and hasted away.

Bear with me while I endeavor, briefly, to indicate the practical conclusions of our study.

It summons us to great boldness. We need to lay aside the apologetic tone. A king once crowned does not stop to submit the parchments of his legitimacy to every challenge. Possession counts for something. Remember what Christianity has done, the disadvantages under which she began her mission, the abuses she has conquered, and the dominance she has attained by the simple force of the truth committed to her custody, and let our advocacy have a triumphant ring. Let us sing as we march.

We need great wisdom. A large work must be done, in which personal discipleship is completed in social, literary and political regeneration, so that Christianity shall not remain a foreign importation, but shall become native to every race by whom it is received, creating new institutions and traditions. We need a different policy of evangelization from that pursued by Augustine in England, or Boniface in Germany, or St. Francis Xavier in India. Permanence of impression is much more important than rapidity of increase; and of equal importance is the earnest endeavor to secure, at the earliest possible day, a competent native leadership; and we must be on our guard, as Prof. Christlieb says, not to Europeanize the native helpers and disciples, lest we isolate them from the great masses of their countrymen. We need, therefore, to build broadly, with an eye to the distant future, without being too intent upon immediate results. For Christianity is not only a religion of personal salvation, and of salvation in the narrow sense of getting men into heaven: it makes a heaven below, as well as conducting to one above and beyond; it means to transfigure into celestial beauty every form of earthly life — its homes, its traffic, its industries, its restless, adven-

turous thought, its art, its science, its social movements, its political councils, until the great globe shall be radiant with a divine glory.

Let us remember, too, that in a task of such exceptional magnitude, there is room and need for all existing exigencies. We are all brethren. David Livingstone cherished the true spirit when he said: "We are all engaged in very much the same work; geographers, astronomers, and mechanicians, laboring to make men better acquainted with each other, promoters of Niger expeditions, soldiers fighting for right against oppression, and sailors rescuing captives in deadly chains, as well as missionaries, are all aiding in hastening on a glorious consummation of all God's dealings with our race." Amen and amen! The very stars in their wide courses fight for the Israel of God. The sun in the heavens hears and heeds the summons of the second and greater Joshua. He gives to every man his place, combining the most diverse and widely scattered labors into the living unity of His plan The widow's mite is not despised. The precious ointment is not wasted when love for Him breaks the brittle vase. The labor of Dorcas is not forgotten nor unregistered. Every true man, every generous deed, all honest work, all patient endurance, even the cup of water given in a disciple's name, every Sunday-school scholar's penny, every invalid's prayer has its honored place in that ministry of grace, whose fruit shall be the redeemed earth. The millions are summoned to make President Garfield's grave monumental, each dollar subscription entitling the donor to formal and permanent record of his name on the long roll of honor. That parchment will grow old and sere, its names passing into oblivion. But he who contributes his treasure and his toil to the erection of God's monumental temple, under whose ample dome the millions are to worship, will find his name carved in undying lines on its eternal pillars.

The memories and inspirations of our gathering, fathers and brethren, forbid the recognition of all hard lines of distinction between domestic and foreign missionary operations.

You who toil among the busy growing millions in this great Valley of the Mississippi, and who behold an empire rapidly growing up beyond the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, for whom the savagery of the Indian, the heathenism of China, and the rotten social life of Utah, are the most terrible of practical problems, are appalled at the magnitude and keenly sensitive to the immediate requirements of the home work. "We must secure and hold these valleys and coasts," you tell us, "for Christ and for His gospel, if we would conquer the continent beyond the Pacific. There is danger that a vigilant enemy may outflank us, and cut off our supplies while we are invading the hostile territory." Your words of warning do not fall on dull and heavy ears. We of the East share your conviction and solicitude; we, too, declare, through one of our most honored representatives, that twenty years here, west of the Father of Waters, may be worth five hundred years in China and Japan. Asia can be evangelized only as North America is redeemed, and converted into a base of operations against the powers of heathenism. But a great and ably officered army always moves in concert, however numerous and scattered the departments. Its ultimate object and ruling spirit are always one and the same. And hence, whether we plant churches and schools at home, or push the work abroad, we are doing either aright only when it is done from supreme love for Christ, and with a view to the conquest of the world. The separation of the ventricles of the heart, or the severance of the arteries from the veins, would be vastly more innocent than any conscious breach between the domestic and the foreign missionary work in the living sympathies of the Church of God. Not Asia for Christ, or America for the Gospel, but the whole round earth, with all her tribes and races, for the Lord, is the open secret of our commission; and for its execution home and foreign missionary societies are only the two arms of a single service, neither of which will we suffer to be amputated, paralyzed, or unemployed. And I am sure that whatever ancient and chronic rivalries may be supposed to exist between Chicago and St. Louis,

there is only the heartiest coöperation between those who, last week, consulted on the home work in the great city of the lakes, and ourselves who, from every part of the land, have come to the metropolis of the Mississippi Valley to pray and to plan for the salvation of the whole earth. Here must we create and stock the arsenals and commissary departments, in the form of living vigorous churches, and Christian schools, whose task it shall be to supply the needed recruits and provide the army of universal conquest with bread and arms.

Nor must we suffer ourselves to become impatient. The Lord has the ages for His own. Let us not forget that eighteen centuries have been required to make us what we are; that we have entered into the inheritance of sixty Christian generations; and that, by comparison, the achievements of missionary endeavor for the last one hundred years constitute a chapter of peculiar and unparalleled success. The record of the nineteenth century is more marvelous than that of the first. With seventy societies distributed through the field; with a force of twenty-four hundred ordained European and American missionaries, and nearly twenty-five thousand native preachers, helpers and catechists; with a native membership of over a million in the mission churches, representing a population five times as large; with an expenditure of nearly seven million dollars annually; with twelve thousand schools and four hundred and fifty thousand pupils; with the Scriptures translated into nearly three hundred languages and dialects, sixty of which had never before been reduced to writing, and reaching a circulation of a hundred and fifty million copies; with native and popular movements in Japan, Burmah and India, portentous from their intensity and magnitude, attended with extravagances peculiarly Oriental, but indicative of the approach of national awakenings; and all the result of little more than three quarters of a century of work, have we any right to complain? Nay, my brethren; we have reason to be gratefully astonished that so large a blessing has rested on labors so recently undertaken, so scattered and inadequate.

Above all, let us have faith; not simply in the sense of confidence that our cause is worthy and approved of God, but in the sense of assurance that our plans and methods are of Divine suggestion and appointment, and of firm reliance on Jesus Christ, as leading us to victory. Faith has grasp as well as rest. It shouts even when it suffers. It is jubilant while it is anxious. It knows, and therefore dares. It is not enough indolently to believe that God will make good His word, for it has pleased Him to make that word good only as it becomes the life of His servants; and if God's word can be made good only in and through us, we must have a clear apprehension of His chosen agencies, and adjust ourselves to them. And the supreme agency that he has ordained is the personal ministry of the Holy Ghost, by whom alone the prophets can be anointed and the message of the gospel be made effective. Let us honor Him! May His baptism fall on us!

We have counted the cost, and have found no cause for despondency or fear. When the pious Spener, to whom German Protestantism owes its first impulse to missionary activity, lay on his death-bed, in 1705, he ordered that his body should be shrouded in garments of white, placed in a white coffin, and wrapped in a white pall, because he would not take so much as a thread of black with him into the grave, having mourned too long, as he confessed, "not only outwardly, but inwardly in his heart." As Spener was carried to his burial, so let us go forth to battle, robed and crowned for

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MISSIONS.

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missi

AT THE

SEVENTY-THIRD ANNUAL MEETING,

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BY

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SERMON.

"AS THEY MINISTERED TO THE LORD, AND FASTED, THE HOLY GHOST SAID, SEPARATE ME BARNABAS AND SAUL FOR THE WORK WHEREUNTO I HAVE CALLED THEM."—*Acts xiii: 2.*

THE door swings here upon a new era in the history of the church. The day of the Jew was ended, the day of the Gentile begun. Prior to this, Paul had preached in Cilicia and Peter had been sent to the house of Cornelius, where the Spirit sealed the testimony to the Gentiles with great power. Some of those, also, who "were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen" had gone as far as Antioch, preaching unto the Grecians the Lord Jesus, and "a great number had believed and turned to the Lord." But this was exceptional and anticipatory. In the main, the gospel had been preached to "none but unto the Jews only." (Acts ix: 30; x: 44; xi: 19–21.)

The text is the pivotal point of the new departure. Now the work of spreading the gospel among the Gentiles is taken in hand and formally inaugurated. Henceforth, the church appears as a missionary church. The map of her future campaigns is no longer bounded by the narrow rim that embraces Palestine, but pushes its border east, west, north, south, to the utmost horizon—a boundary line that takes in the world.

Note how the work is undertaken and carried on. Not Barnabas, nor Peter, nor John, nor even Paul, advises, projects, shapes the enterprise. It is altogether the purpose, the plan, the work of the Holy Spirit. He originates the scheme; he chooses and calls the workmen; he equips them for their service. This text record stands for this whole mis-

sion history of the book of Acts. From first to last, in choosing apostles or choosing deacons, in holding councils, in laying all plans, in doing all work, the one overshadowing fact is the recognized supremacy and leadership of the Spirit. And in this single fact lies, beyond question, the secret of that amazing success in diffusing the gospel among the nations, that has made this first era of the work of the church the inspiring model for all after years. Other factors — consecrated genius, eloquence, learning, money — had their place and power. But these had to do with the work and its results, much as in the grand campaigns of Napoleon every marshal, and general, and colonel, and captain, and every soldier of the battalions had to do in achieving victory. They were indispensable and potential, each and all; but it was through their unswerving loyalty to the one supreme wisdom that planned the battles, and the one supreme will that fused and ruled all other wills, and inspired all other hearts, that the final triumph came.

So here. There was no iron sovereignty working out its behests, and making no account of the diverse and peculiar gifts and adaptations of those on whom it laid its hand. There was fullest place and play for the fire of Peter, the amiability of Barnabas, the persuasiveness of John, the learning and logic of Paul; ample place and power, too, for gifts, and prayer, and toil. But all these elements and forces were clearly subordinate. Behind them, and working through them, the one pervading, inspiring, potential reason of their efficiency was the leadership and supremacy of the Holy Spirit. This would seem too plain on the face of the records to admit of question. If any doubt, they have only to turn to the twelfth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians; for therein the apostle Paul, expounding this very matter of spiritual gifts and work, expressly affirms that all these "diversities of gifts," and "operations," "worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." No language could more clearly or emphatically affirm the supreme lordship of the Spirit.

But God's plan is not changed, nor his gospel, nor the

office and work of the Spirit. The command of Christ lays its touch upon us to-day with precisely the same obligation as upon the disciples who heard it from his lips. Now, as truly as at Antioch, the Spirit assumes the sovereign management of all efforts to send forth into all the world the glad tidings of salvation. The methods he uses, the manifestations of himself he makes, are different; but his regnancy is unchanged. He came at Pentecost to *abide* in the world, and not merely to abide as one who should teach, lead, sanctify, empower all Christ's disciples, but to take them under his divine control, and by that domination, lovingly accepted, carry the scheme of redemption to its issue.

Not what we think or prefer, therefore; not what we can reason out as a fitting end for the gospel to propose; not what we can demonstrate as certain to be a success — nothing of all this is to have place here. First, last, always, as to our aim and our methods, as to the toilers who go forth, the fields into which they go, the truths which they shall proclaim, and as to the prayers and gifts of those who send them, the one only question is, what is the mind of the Spirit? Find that, and we find for all time the one supreme, unvarying law of missions. If we fail here, we fail everywhere.

THE END PROPOSED.

What, then, did these first missionaries propose to do? What was the end they sought to realize? This text chapter, the first chapter of distinctively missionary history, will enable us to see. After Paul and Barnabas had found it impossible to persuade the Jews of Pisidian Antioch to accept the truth concerning Jesus Christ, and had said, "Seeing ye judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles," there follows this record: "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." (Acts xiii: 46–48.)

This word "ordained" is one of the key-words of the gospel. Its counterparts meet us all through the New Testament scriptures. Believers are those "called," "chosen,"

"sealed," "predestinated." Taken together they constitute an "ecclesia," a company of those "called out" from the world. The apostle James, speaking in the council at Jerusalem of Peter's missionary visit to the house of Cornelius, says, "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to *take out* of them a people for his name." (Acts xv: 14.) And Peter, writing in after years to Gentile converts, the fruits of missionary labors in "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia," gives them greeting as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." Then, a little further on, expounding this language, and emphasizing the obligation to holy living which it involved, he says: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (I Pet. ii: 9.) And Paul, setting forth only more specifically the same gospel which he preached on his first missionary journey, and writing like Peter to Gentile Christians, not only calls them "chosen," but "chosen" in Christ "before the foundation of the world." And he goes further, and declares that the purpose of God in this choosing or predestinating of them as believers, was that they might be "members of the body of Christ," might "comprehend with all saints, the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," and so be "filled with all the fulness of God." And all this in order that through them, constituting with their fellow-believers the "holy nation," the "peculiar people," the redeemed church, there might be made known to this world, and to other worlds, the manifold wisdom of God in the scheme of his salvation. (Eph. i, ii, iii.)

This is missionary language; the language of men chosen, taught, anointed by the Holy Spirit, and sent forth to fulfill the command of Christ as to the evangelization of the world. It is hence the language which furnishes the exact conception which the church is to lift up and seek to realize in all its endeavors to honor the same command. There is vast significance in this. As concerns the present order of things, the day of the Jew was indeed passed, the day of the Gentile

come. The middle wall of partition that had stood stern and defiant through the long centuries of the old economy was broken down. Henceforth the gospel was to be preached to all men everywhere, and preached with equal pledge of deliverance, certainty of heirship, forelook of triumph to all who would receive it. There was to be neither Jew nor Greek, neither Scythian nor barbarian, neither bond nor free, but one royal fellowship, one divine and blessed oneness of faith, hope, and love in Christ Jesus.

A GOSPEL OF SEPARATION.

Nevertheless, this missionary gospel, this gospel to be preached among all the nations, was to be emphatically a gospel of separation, a gospel of election, a gospel everywhere calling out and setting apart a peculiar people. The new dispensation was in this respect the precise counterpart of the old. The very terms that appear in and distinctively stamp that old economy of law, reappear in and stamp this new economy of grace. "Covenant," "promise," "children of covenant," "children of promise," "people of God," "peculiar people," "holy nation," "heirs of promise," "inheritance," "kingdom," "kingdom of priests" — what are these words but the very vernacular of the New Testament, the perpetually recurring molds in which the Holy Spirit expresses his thought and purpose concerning what this gospel is, and what it does for all who accept its offers? In other words, the supreme end which in this age the Holy Spirit proposes to accomplish by this witnessing of the gospel to all nations, is to call out thence a people chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; set apart in this present time to be the witnesses of his gospel, the revealers of his grace; and destined in the ages to come to be the transformed and transfigured reflections of himself, and as his body and bride to share his royalty and glory.

Let us make no mistake here. We stand under the pierced hands and the bleeding side. We know this cross over our heads means blood shed, death suffered, for the sin of the world. We compass the nations and the ages in our thought,

and with him that hangs here our hearts reach out far and wide with ardent desire, with inexpressible and tearful longings that all men may know this Christ, may accept this gospel, may possess eternal life.

But God's desires are not God's decrees. This Christ pitying all, eager to save all, is the Christ rejected, hated, crucified by those he seeks to save. The amazing invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," is uttered in all ears, but only here and there a Nicodemus, a woman at the well, a thief on the cross, makes response. Across the continents for eighteen centuries have sounded the wonderful words, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" but among the swarming millions how insignificant the numbers that care to listen, and how few of these that are eager to possess the gift.

DOES THE GOSPEL PLAN FAIL?

But this is what is to be expected in the nature of the case. This is a gospel published to all, inviting all, urging all, but compelling none. With the proclamation of this gospel to men *we* have to do; with men's acceptance or rejection of it, *God*. We plant, we water; he, and he alone, gives the increase. This is the doctrine of our text, and of all Scripture. Barnabas and Paul are sent by the Spirit to Cyprus. They preach the gospel from one end of the island to the other — preach it in the Spirit, and hence just as faithfully as at Antioch or Iconium. Yet we do not read of any spirit of inquiry here as in those cities. No church appears in the records as planted on the island. No gathering even of those curious to know of the new doctrine is hinted at. The Roman proconsul "desired to hear the Word of God," and "believed." But with this exception the work stands unattested by any results. Was this missionary tour, this proclamation of the gospel in Cyprus, therefore a failure? No. Paul gives us the true explanation of the matter: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh

manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish." (II Cor. ii: 14–15.) And this, observe, is not some inference of Paul's, some attempt to palliate, or excuse, or cover up his failures. It is the Spirit's own testimony; and it holds good evermore. If the millions of China, and India, and the Dark Continent accept these glad tidings, are delivered from the appalling curse of heathenism, become the children of the kingdom, blessed, inexpressibly blessed the work, and unutterably glad may they rightfully be who have carried the message, and we who have sent them forth. But if these benighted millions reject this testimony, and turn away from the lifted cross to their cruel and debasing superstitions, none the less acceptably in the sight of God, none the less effectively as regards the coming of the kingdom, will these gospel heralds have done their work.

Judson wrought four hard and painful years before a single Karen so much as asked the way of life. Morrison toiled seven long years in China before he saw his first inquirer. The missionaries of the London Society spent ten years in Madagascar without a known conversion. Fifteen years rolled away at Tahiti before the first native voice was heard in prayer. Yet Judson was as faithful the first year as the last, and pleased his Master as well by the service he rendered. So of all the rest, and of that mighty, unnamed host who through all the centuries have had like experience of giving a witness everywhere despised. Abel, Enoch, and Noah testified to a world that hurled in their faces its mockeries of the God they worshiped; and through all the long years of their witnessing there is no record of revival, or prayer-meeting, or inquirer. Yet there they stand, their names heading God's roll of honor in the eleventh of Hebrews, and the eulogy of their faith and witness inspired by God himself, and by his command hung up for all the ages to read.

So of all such witnesses. It is a fruitage to be exceedingly desired, that three thousand souls should be moved by a single sermon to cry, "What must we do to be saved?" Yet it does

not appear that Peter was ever privileged to repeat that experience. It is a royal honor, and one that must thrill the heart of him who enjoys it as nothing else can this side heaven, to welcome thronging thousands of eager converts, as our brethren in the Sandwich Islands in those years of memorable harvest; and as, in these later years, the Baptist missionaries among the Telugus. So it must be grand to give a lifetime to the service of winning souls, like Miron Winslow, and our revered brother, the still spared and vigorous Titus Coan.[1] But such honors, such service are not permitted to all, nor does it matter. The approval and the rewards of the Master turn not upon the length of the service rendered, nor upon its apparent success, but upon its fidelity: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." And when the day of the great reckoning comes, it will be found that whether the toilers wrought few or many years, saw few or many sheaves gathered into the garner, or even died without so much as a visible token of fruit, no labor has been in vain, no life has been a failure.

WHY MEN REJECT THE GOSPEL.

Are any, now, oppressed with the thought that this conception of the missionary work makes it seem a kind of hopeless undertaking? Do they stand facing these unsaved millions, and, with a feeling almost of dismay, ask why, after eighteen centuries of the preaching of the cross, so few comparatively have been reached and saved? I do not wonder. There are mysteries here that no human wisdom can solve. Why men everywhere do not accept the gospel, with its mighty deliverances and glorious hopes, and accept it as eagerly as captives accept liberty, or the hungry bread, and why they prefer instead to hug sin, and endure its beggary, and submit to its iron yoke and scorpion lash, I cannot see. But one thing I do know, one thing I can say. Standing by this cross of the only begotten Son of God, I know that God pities and loves men, and with all the immeasurable fullness of his being longs for their salvation. And I know that wherever

[1] Since deceased.

this gospel goes and this cross is lifted, unto the very ends of the earth, God authorizes the message-bearers to plead and beseech, and by all possible agencies strive to persuade all men everywhere to become the children of his kingdom.

And when you ask me why they do not, I can only answer, with one of these first missionary witnesses: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them." (II Cor. iv:. 4.) Make all we may of other reasons, of peculiar forms of superstition, of fetichism, and caste, and cannibalism, the one supreme explanation of the rejection of the gospel lies just here: not only in the heart of India, and China, and Africa, and under the shadow of every pagoda, or joss-house, or idol-shrine of whatever name, but in Christian lands, within the walls of Christian churches, within the homes where the Word of God is read and prayer offered, one dire and tremendous fact confronts us — the hate and antagonism of the devil. Men are his slaves. They love darkness rather than light. They walk, believe, think, choose, according to, and under the influence of, the god of this world. The father of lies faces every missionary, every minister of the gospel, and his hand is on the latch of every door the gospel seeks to enter.

THE GOSPEL SCHEME INSPIRING.

But this Scripture conception of the aim of all missionary effort, viz.: the calling out from the nations of a peculiar people, is not a depressing one. We have only to open these missionary epistles to see how wonderfully it inspires faith and inflames zeal. We are much in the way of speaking of our calling as a calling from sin simply, as a deliverance from the penalties of a broken law, as the possession of a hope of final admission into heaven. Not so these apostolic witnesses. They had tasted the powers of the world to come. They had seen miracles attest the divine authority of their Lord, and the divine power of his gospel. They had looked upon that Lord after his resurrection, had noted the signs of his oncoming glorification, had stood by when he had

been upraised before their eyes, and had disappeared in the clouds of heaven. Some of them had seen him in his transfiguration, and had been the privileged eye-witnesses of the majesty awaiting him and them. One, at least, had been caught up into the very presence of the throne, and enjoyed communion with him whose inheritance he was to share. And out of this understanding of their calling, what heavenly ambitions they seek to incite, what glowing ideals alike for admonition and encouragement they set before all believers.

They faced a world lost, hopeless, despairful. They longed with utmost desire for the souls of men, and with prayers and tears by day and night they sought to persuade all who would hear their message to believe unto salvation. But the one thought regnant ever in their hearts, and by which they were most inspired and energized, was not that they were sent to offer a gospel of deliverance from the penalty and curse of sin, but a gospel of adoption into God's family, of citizenship with the saints, of heirship with the Lord Jesus Christ, of ultimate triumph as the crowned and glorified sons of God.

GOD'S WORD EXALTED.

I turn now to consider some of the practical applications of this thought. 1. And first, this: that a supreme allegiance to and exaltation of the Word of God, underlies and vitally conditions this whole missionary enterprise. These earliest missionaries were, as we have seen, chosen, equipped, sent out, led, taught, empowered of the Spirit. And for what? To be as the Lord had pre-announced, his witnesses. Whence came their messages? In part from what some of them had seen and known while associated with their Lord; in part from special supernatural revelations made to them from time to time by the Spirit. As to one of them, the witness was to be to truth which he had received from the lips of the Lord in glory. But in chief part, the testimony was to be as to the teachings of the scriptures of the Old Testament which they had in their hands. How significant, now,

that they who testified never knew any difference as to divineness or authority between these different sources whence their messages came. Whether from the lips of Jesus on earth or in heaven, or communicated directly by the Spirit, or taken from the utterances of Moses, or David, or Isaiah, it was one and the same kind of testimony — the divinely inspired, absolutely infallible Word of God.

There are two notable things about this: first, that these missionary witnesses planted themselves on the irrefragable authority of the Scriptures; and, second, that they taught the doctrines of these Scriptures as the only doctrines that could honor God or help men.

These teachers, let us remember, were chosen of the Spirit, and supernaturally qualified for the specific purpose of making known to men the truths which God desired them to know, and upon the knowledge of which hung their eternal welfare. What a mighty emphasis, then, in the fact that not one of these Spirit-taught witnesses to the truth ever impugned in the slightest degree these Old Testament scriptures which it is the modern fashion to ridicule. Not a word with one of them all about any mistakes of Moses, or David, or Isaiah. Paul even, skilled in the learning of the schools, bred to all the exacting demands for proof, to all the distrust of theories that the study of law supplies, familiar, too, with the subtlest forms of skeptical thought,— Paul nowhere so much as hints at any errors of chronology, any misstatements of history, any false principles of ethics, any unjust conceptions of God, any tyrannous ideas of moral government, any inhuman requirements of any kind. Not a word with him about the allegory of creation, the legend of the deluge, the parable of Lot, the myth of Jonah and the whale, the unchristian spirit of the imprecatory Psalms. On the contrary, this peer of the sages of his time, sweeping in his thought the range of the culture of that day — a culture the very highest antiquity could boast, and, apart from Christianity, the highest any age of the world has ever reached — never found in all the science and philosophy and literature of that profound classic learning

so much as one truth, one principle, one sentiment, whereby to correct or enrich these Scripture testimonies! Not only so, but, standing in the august presence of a Roman governor and a Jewish king, he went back to the records now most rejected and scoffed at, and, planting himself there, said: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses" — mark the words — "than *Moses* did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." (Acts xxvi: 22–23.)

And there stood they all. Not a man or woman or child in this missionary epoch ever dreamed of doubting the full, divine inspiration, the infallible authority of the Word of God. They would as soon have thought of questioning the stability of the eternal throne. And this was not the mere blind assent of those on whose necks was an iron yoke. It was the profound conviction of those conscious of a blessed freedom, and moved with earnest desire to win others to the same divine fellowship. They knew that if they were to command men, they must speak with the authority of God. And they did. And that is the only ground upon which any witness for God's truth can in any age appeal to men.

THE DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURE TAUGHT.

But these apostolic missionaries made it their prime business to unfold and expound these Scriptures. And, according to their witness, the salvation of all men turned upon their acceptance or rejection of the doctrines herein revealed. What those doctrines were, how clearly these records everywhere show. A race lost and without hope apart from the grace of God; the human heart natively, and persistently, and mightily, alien from God, and at enmity with him and his law; a divine Christ lifted on the cross as a true and literal expiation for sin; a heart regenerated by the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit, and this conditioned upon faith

in Jesus Christ; the real, bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and his glorification at the right hand of the Father, as the guaranty of the like resurrection and glorification of his saints; the return of the Lord, and the establishment of his kingdom over all the earth; a day of final judgment; and beyond this life a future to all who die unsaved unlighted by a gleam of hope — these are the unmistakable witness of these earliest and Spirit-taught missionaries. And these are the testimonies repeated and reëmphasized by the Spirit, by and through which this first missionary era of the church achieved its grand results, and in the life-time of the witnesses sounded forth the gospel among all the nations of the known world. (Col. i: 6.)

If we are to share their success, we must share their faith and their testimony. But how much faith and testimony in pulpit and pew that comes short of this. How many that impugn the infallible inspiration of the Scriptures; that declare their chronology false, their statements of fact in part untrue to history, in part irreconcilable with science; that affirm their conceptions of God unworthy, their teachings often imperfect, sometimes contradictory; that insist even that the Bible is only one of various divine revelations — the written word, the book of nature, the testimony of reason — and that these three are of coördinate authority.

Then, along with such views, and largely as their legitimate outgrowth, how many have dissolved all the blackness out of sin; put pity and pardon in the place of justice and penalty; substituted development for regeneration; reduced Calvary to a vivid object-lesson of God's love, and the judgment to a figure of speech; metamorphosed the ages to come into a period for rectifying the failures of God's moral government in this present time; and finish up their teachings by calling the pit of perdition a myth, or spanning it with a bow of promise.

LAX DOCTRINE HOSTILE TO THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT.

What need to argue how utterly antagonistic all such teachings are to the Scripture theory of missions? That theory

is rooted in the infallible Word. It knows only a race of lost sinners. It exalts God and magnifies his law. It sees deliverance only in the shedding of the blood of the one true sacrifice for sin. It plants the necessity of supernatural regeneration at the threshold of the kingdom. Its only symbol of help is the cross. Its only word of hope is, *now*. Its only outlook for those who die unbelieving is a night of dread, unbroken doom. Say what fine things these teachers of the new theology may about the innate goodness of man, his longings for light, the sweetness of pity, the divineness of pardon, and the like, no such beliefs will ever send men to face the malarial death-belt of Africa, or the fierce cannibals of the South Pacific. No. Only such tremendous truths as cluster around Sinai and Calvary — ruin, redemption, life, death, heaven, hell — can inspire the soul to such undertakings. To confront a lost world with judgment and doom impending, and try and stir the people of God to duty with a theology of this limp and modern sort, were like seeking to inspire an army for battle by giving it chloroform. Worse even. Such doctrines fortify heathenism. The peril of Japan to-day is the tendencies of her thinking men toward infidelity. Dr. Davis, of Kioto, says that he has had to meet in his class-room the infidel objections to the gospel furnished to Japanese students by the sermons preached in American and so-called evangelical pulpits, and the editorials and other articles printed in so-called evangelical newspapers! And he declares that in one instance he took a class ready to graduate, and spent a full month in steady endeavors to uproot these tares sown across the sea by American Christians!

It is bad enough for Christian England to poison China with opium, and furnish from Birmingham idols for the Hindus to worship in Bombay. But this is worse. Opium deadens chiefly the sensibilities, and idols carry no daggers; but this lax theology stupefies the church at home, and stabs Christianity abroad.

CHRISTIAN BENEVOLENCE.

2. But again, our thought furnishes an enlarged conception of Christian giving. I noticed a slight demonstration of applause when the financial report of the year was read, and a small credit balance appeared. But how many know how that balance came? Read this opening paragraph in the October *Herald*, and see: "*Only by curtailment of needed expenditure, and by deferring some payments to another year which he would have gladly included in those of the present year, will the treasurer be able to report, as he hopes to do, a small balance on the credit side of the treasury.*" That is to say, by cutting off expenditures urgently demanded by the work, and by carrying over to the next year the debts that ought to have been paid in this, we have a credit balance! Little cause that for congratulation! But the showing is even worse; for, after all our brave resolvings and re-resolvings at past anniversaries to advance our giving at least twenty-five per cent, the figures show, instead of gain, an actual falling off in our contributions, and of nearly a thousand dollars the current year. Indeed, only the gifts of the dead have for years kept this Board from becoming bankrupt.

I would not utter one discouraging, much less one censorious, word here. I will not affirm with President Washburn of Robert College, that such facts indicate a diminished interest in the cause of missions. I will not echo Professor Christlieb's question, "Where is the deep enthusiasm displayed at the time when most of our missionary societies were founded?" I will not take sides with Rev. Griffith John, himself a devoted missionary of the London Society, who cites facts and figures to show the flagging zeal of English Christians I accept all that can be said about the liberal pouring forth of treasure to establish and endow colleges and theological seminaries at home and abroad, to plant schools among the freedmen and in the New West, to build houses of worship, to pay church debts, to carry on city missions, to help forward manifold other Christian and philanthropic enterprises. Nevertheless, when I remember that a thousand millions of heathen have

never yet heard the sound of the gospel, and with every heart-beat are passing into eternity unsaved, and when I think of the vast resources at the command of the professed followers of Christ, I cannot but arraign the church as sadly unfaithful to the trust committed to her charge, of evangelizing the nations.

OUR RESOURCES.

Think of the facts. One fifth of the population of this land is claimed to be made up of evangelical Christians. Not only so, but the gain of such evangelical Christian element in our population during the past thirty years has been sixty per cent greater than the gain of the population itself, with its immense influx of foreign and largely irreligious immigrants. What follows? Secretary Clark stated last year, as his deduction, that the "very atmosphere is charged with moral and religious ideas;" that "a sense of great obligation to God and to mankind pervades the nation;" that hence the "lever to raise the world out of the degradation of heathenism has been placed in our hands." This of our spiritual resources. What now of the financial? Let us see. Our mines furnish every year $100,000,000 of gold and silver; then, according to Dr. Dorchester, supposing the Christian to hold his own with others in industry, sagacity, success, one fifth of this belongs to the church. Our agricultural products yield not less than $2,000,000,000 and one fifth belongs to the church. Our banks are said to have an aggregate of deposits of not far from $3,000,000,000, and one fifth belongs to the church. Our coal, and iron, and copper, and salt, and coal-oil, and manufactures do not yield less than $500,000,000, and one fifth belongs to the church. Our railroads yield in net earnings $250,000,000, and one fifth belongs to the church. And the wealth of the country, it is to be remembered, more than keeps pace with the advance in population. As a matter of fact, it has quadrupled since 1850, and multiplied sixteen-fold within the memory of persons now living. Mr. Mulhall, an English statistician, says, "Every day the sun rises upon the American people it sees an addition to the accumulated

wealth of the republic of $2,500,000, which is equal to one third the daily accumulation of mankind." And Senator Hoar, of Massachusetts, is authority for the statement that "every twenty years there is added to the valuation of this country wealth enough to buy the whole German Empire, with its buildings, and its ships, and its invested property." And one fifth of all this prodigious increase supposably belongs to the church.

OUR GIFTS.

But what are the facts now as to our Christian giving? How far does this "atmosphere charged with moral and religious ideas," this "sense of great obligation to God and mankind," arouse Christian people, and constrain them to pour forth their money for the spread of the gospel? The first fact in the way of answer has already been noted, viz.: that in spite of all the eloquent utterances at St. Louis a year ago, and all the enthusiasm with which the resolution was adopted to advance our contributions, this year's giving is a thousand dollars less than that of the year preceding. More. For twenty years our Congregational churches have made no gain in the per cent of their giving. Taking the last five years and comparing them with the five years preceding, there has been a yearly falling off of more than $20,000, or of five and two thirds per cent. In 1850 the average of giving was $1.21 per church-member; in 1881, a fraction more than than 91 cents. A strange kind of spiritual electricity this with which the atmosphere of the land is "charged!" A very peculiar "sense of great obligation to God and mankind" that pervades the church! If the lever to raise the heathen be indeed in our hands, we are not remarkably zealous in using it.

Meantime we spend, so the papers say, $125,000,000 every year for dress goods, and Christian people spend their share; $25,000,000 for kid gloves, and church-members spend their share; $5,000,000 for ostrich feathers, and the disciples of Christ spend their share; $80,000,000, at least, for tobacco, and Christian men, and some ministers, spend their share; $180,000,000 are estimated to have been spent abroad in

travel and purchases by 60,000 Americans, the past year, and Christian travelers spent their share. Then how many houses of Christian people built every year, that cost from $20,000 to $100,000 each? How many Christian business men put $50,000, $75,000, $100,000 into a single enterprise — a manufactory, a mine, a lumber venture, a speculation in stocks — and repeat it every few years as an ordinary business transaction? How many who, by their own witness, realize from $10,000 to $50,000 yearly in net income?

Put, now, these figures as to our resources and these as to our expenditures side by side with the figures which show what we give for the spread of the gospel, and what can we say more truly of this latter sum than to call it a pitiful dole?

But where lies the trouble? Primarily in the lack of a profound sense that all we have and are is the purchase of the blood of Calvary, and as such is to be held and used entirely subject to God's disposal. We need preëminently a baptism of consecration.

LACK OF SYSTEMATIC GIVING.

Then, further, those who are disposed to give have little or no system in their benevolence. Note the facts:

The last *Year-Book* gives as the total of our church-members 381,697. Let us discard the odd thousands as unable to give. Suppose the remaining 300,000 were to give five cents per week towards missions; that would be $2.60 per member, or a total of $780,000; considerably more than double the amount contributed, apart from legacies, the current year. Again: Suppose these 300,000 givers were to be divided thus: 150,000 to give five cents per week; 75,000, ten cents per week; 50,000, twenty cents per week; 25,000, fifty cents per week; then the account would stand thus:

150,000	church-members	at	.05	per	week	=	$390.000
75,000	" "	"	.10	"	"	"	390,000
50,000	" "	"	.20	"	"	"	520,000
25,000	" "	"	.50	"	"	"	650,000

This gives a total of $1,950,000 — a sum which, setting aside

the bequests, is more than five times what was contributed the past year. Do any think the apportionment excessive and burdensome? The surrender of one cigar a day would more than pay the share of some. The saving of street-car fare by walking one way, either to or from business, would pay it with more. The sacrifice of one picture, one book, one plume, one bit of jewelry, one Christmas gift, one button on kid gloves even, would pay it with how many. Writes one of our well-known missionaries, "Last year the amount given by the churches of this field, comprising 1,408 church-members, was $7,060. To appreciate this, you should see their poverty. Giving here means self-denial — the giving up, not of luxuries, for those are little known, but of the comforts and necessities of life. Were the self-denial represented in that $7,000 practiced by the home churches, the treasuries of benevolent societies would be so full that their managers would not know what to do with the money." If these 300,000 giving members of our churches should each contribute fifty cents per week, this missionary prophecy would come true. For then there would pour into the treasury the enormous sum of $7,800,000; and this simply as the result of a system of paying our dues to the Lord as regularly as we pay them to men.

DEVOTION OF INCOMES.

But, dear friends, why should we not go far beyond this? There are many Christian men whom the Lord has so prospered that they have reached the point of competency, and not a few have passed it, and are rapidly accumulating wealth. Their families are amply provided for; they can educate their children, meet all needful expenses, and lay by a cash surplus of from $5,000 to $50,000 in fair business times. Why, now, should not a large number of such men, with from five to twenty years of active life before them, say: "Lord, I cannot go abroad to preach to the heathen, but I can earn the money to send those who will do the work better than I could, and henceforth I purpose to give myself to mak-

ing money to this end. Give me thy blessing, that I may reap thirty, sixty, an hundred-fold."

Suppose there were ten cities in New England outside of Boston, like Portland, for example, that could furnish each ten such men — men who could put $5,000 apiece into this treasury. Suppose Boston could furnish fifty who could put in $10,000 each, New York City as many more, Chicago and the West — we are *very poor* out there, you know, with only three or four hundred millions of dollars' worth of corn a year, as much more of wheat, and so on — Chicago and the West fifty more at $5,000, and all the rest of the churches of the land an equal amount in varying sums, then we should have this showing:

Ten cities with ten men contributing each $5,000	$500,000
Boston, with fifty contributing each $10,000	500,000
New York City, with fifty contributing each $10,000	500,000
Chicago and the West, with fifty contributing each $5,000	250,000
The remaining churches contributing an equal amount	1,750,000
Income of the Board from these sources	$3,500,000
Add the contributions of the churches on the basis of weekly gifts, previously suggested	1,950,000
Total of missionary receipts	$5,450,000

You smile at such figures. But I insist, with all soberness, that there is nothing preposterous about them. I believe that when Christian men are as zealous and as wise in their generation as the children of this world are in theirs, and bring to bear the same sagacity, and enthusiasm, and devotion of means in managing the Lord's business, they will keep such sums pouring into the Lord's treasury.

One thing more. Men of the world form syndicates for the sale of stocks, lands, and the prosecution of various enterprises. Why, now, should there not be mission syndicates? Why should not a score or more of Christian capitalists get together and divide up a province of China among them, each one assuming his share of the territory to be occupied, and saying, I will be responsible for giving or raising all the money required to evangelize the people of my district? and then another group of missionary financiers say, We will

take Japan, and another circle the Bihé field in Africa, and another the work proposed in Umzila's kingdom, and so on? Why is it not just as practicable to develop missions thus as it is mines or railroads?

MOTIVES OF INSPIRATION.

3. This line of thought brings into the foreground the true motives which are to inspire our efforts, and emphasizes the true secret of success. Some of our missionaries think we are in peril here. They speak, in their letters to me, of those who are moved largely by the "romance of missions;" who are more affected by the "privations and sufferings of the missionaries than by the needs of the lost and the commands of the Lord." More potent still, they think, is the feeling prevalent among the churches, that inclines to test all mission work by its apparent results, and that has much or little interest in it accordingly. Given so much money and so many men, and such and such progress ought to follow: China, India, Africa, the world even, evangelized in so many years. If the work does not show such appreciable fruitage, such positive and increasing dividends upon the outlay, it is a failure. So runs the theory.

But such, clearly, are not the motives which are to determine our missionary zeal. Our duty to send the gospel to the heathen no more depends on the trials and sufferings of the missionaries, than on the climate in which they labor or the food they eat. Just as little is it to be measured by percentages and the multiplication table. Not that we are to make no account of facts that go to the stirring up of enthusiasm. Far from it. By all means let us magnify whatever tokens of cheer are to be found. Let us incite our zeal by the proofs that these age-long and relentless despotisms of Oriental faith are at last giving way. Let us exult over the Sandwich Islands redeemed, and Madagascar redeemed, and the Telugus flocking by thousands to the cross. Let us take highest inspiration from these open doors that now on every hand invite the heralds of salvation. Let us accept all these proofs of what Christianity has done and can do. Nay, let us accept

even the statistics — hard as they are for some of us to believe — which testify of the expansion and potency of evangelical religion; albeit I should as soon think of counting the headstones in a cemetery to find out the growth and resources of a city, as of counting the names on church registers to measure the progress and power of the gospel. Nay, let us accept the dry bones of the prophet's vision that *are to become* men under the breath of the Spirit, and reckon them among the forces that are to push on this missionary work.

But let us never forget that all such facts are simply encouragements; in no sense the grand, impelling motives for carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth. With that question, so far as concerns our obligation, neither the sufferings of missionaries nor the presumptions or probabilities of success have anything to do. We stand precisely where these disciples in the text stood when the Spirit said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Not a word as to any conditions. Not a word of promise as to idolatry loosening its hold, temples becoming churches, Cyprus redeemed, Asia Minor redeemed; not so much as the barest hint at any success that was to follow. They were to go forth simply because the Holy Spirit assigned the work. Theirs the responsibility of testifying — his, of making the testimony bear fruit.

Exactly so with us. No matter whether success in the work comes early, or late, or does not come at all. No matter whether thousands hang upon the witness of the Word, and revival follows revival till the Dark Continent is luminous with the light of heaven, and China and India are vocal with the songs of the redeemed; or there be roused instead the spirit of heathen hate, and the messengers of peace by scores and hundreds seal their testimony with their blood. Nay, no matter if all the missionary toils and tears and martyr-deaths, from the day of our Lord's utterance of his last command till now, had not won a single soul; all this would not take a feather's weight from the obligation laid upon our hearts. Neither success nor failure determines duty. We are soldiers. From our great Captain's lips one summons rings ever in our

ears — "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." It is not for us to debate, but to obey.

OBLIGATION CENTERED IN LOVE.

I do not forget that mere enforced obedience is not what our Lord asks; that if we give our bodies to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth nothing. But I assume that we are not hirelings rallying under the banner for the pay we get, and much less an army of slaves or conscripts, doing battle against our will. No; we are fellow-servants with him who, while constrained by the surpassing love of Christ, felt that necessity was laid upon him. Our personal devotion to him whose name we wear, is the one glad and potent inspiration to all service. But because we are his true followers, and are ruled by his love, we accept his yoke as the true symbol of our calling, and know no sweeter privilege than obeying his commandments, doing his will. Service is what proves and exalts love.

Ah, if in this age of sentiment, of little sense of God, of loosened grip of conscience and of obligation, the Lord's professed people could only be got face to face with him, as Moses when the bush flamed with the ineffable presence of Jehovah! or as Isaiah, when the splendors of the eternal throne with its attendant seraphim flashed before him! And if, while they were conscious of the overshadowing of God, and of the allegiance they owe to him, there could be stamped on their souls in letters of fire that old and almost forgotten word, *obedience*, a revival of missionary zeal would be sure to follow.

I am sure, my brethren, that our greatest need lies here. Genius is well, and eloquence, and learning, and sagacity, and money; but they are not the foremost needs of this great work. When God would send Moses on his mighty errand, and failed to convince him that he would have success, you remember he said to him at last, "What is that in thine hand?" Moses answered, "A rod." "Cast it on the ground," said the Lord. He did so, and it became a serpent, the instrument of a miracle. It was the commonest bit of a thorn-bush — rude, battered, unsightly — just such as the Arabs of

the desert use with their flocks to-day. Yet God yoked his omnipotence thereto! And thenceforth, wherever that rod went, God went; wherever it was lifted with reverent and prayerful heart, the majesty of heaven seemed obedient to its behest. Plague after plague came and went, the sea was cleft, the Amalekites were defeated, waters burst forth from the rock — there was nothing that could withstand its power. And when the day of its service was over, it seems to have been laid up by the ark — a rod covered with buds and blossoms — to be a memorial evermore of how God chooses the weak things, and base things, and things that are despised, to confound the things which are mighty, and bring to naught the things which are.

In this profound conviction of our utter nothingness, and in the kindred conviction of the infinite resources of the Holy Spirit as always available, always waiting to be appropriated by the Lord's disciples, must always lie our real inspiration and the secret of our success. Think a moment why.

THE CONFLICT — THE FOE.

Christian living is a battle, not a hymn. Here are two mighty kingdoms — the kingdoms of light and of darkness, of good and evil, of Christ and Satan — pitted against each other, and having as their issue the triumph of truth or error, of holiness or sin. What tremendous and dire conflict does this involve. And how manifest that, in the final struggle that impends, the forces of good and evil will be marshaled with the utmost sagacity, and hurled against each other with an energy and a determination never paralleled before.

This kingdom of evil is no figure of speech. It is an organization real, complete, potential, and that, ever since that far, mystic time when the angels forfeited their high estate and were thrust out of heaven, has steadily sought to thwart God. At its head is the prince of the power of the air, the god of this world, a being by native endowment only inferior to the Son of God. He organizes its forces, projects its campaigns, leads on its undertakings.

Co-working with him, sharing his spirit, eager to execute his behests, pliant to his slightest wish, is a vast host of principalities and powers, possessing amazing gifts of intelligence, activity and strength,—once, it is quite possible, the equals of Gabriel, Michael, and the noblest angels that surround God's throne. Through all the ages of human history, this realm of fallen magnates has had but one aim, and has concentrated on that all its infernal sagacity, and hate, and energy. That aim has been the ruin of our race. From the fall of our first parents down to this hour, whatever of deceit, and wrong, and violence, and pain, and woe, have been in the world, have been due directly, according to God's Word, to the machinations and efforts of this arch-enemy of God. But when the Babe of Bethlehem was born, the gates of the pit swung wide, and perdition, as it were, emptied itself, that its dark legions might destroy the hopes of men, and prevent the enthronement of Christ as universal King. We stand on the eve of the final battle. Mighty as the antagonisms of the past have been, this is the hour of supremest conflict. Hence the resources of the potentate of evil, all his infernal craft, and malignity, and far-reaching influence, will be taxed to the last degree. For, if he fails now, he fails forever.

OUR HELP.

The issue is not doubtful. Yonder empty tomb, yonder ascending Lord, hardly less than the word that cannot be broken, give certain pledge of the triumph of the Christ-kingdom. But tremendous warfare foreruns and conditions that triumph; and in waging this, we need the highest encouragements and helps. Such we have preëminently in the leadership and sovereignty of the Spirit. He was in the counsels of eternity, and with the Father and the Son projected the scheme of redemption. He met the great adversary at the threshold of human history, and made the first death caused by sin become the first victory of redeeming grace. He inspired the sweet hope of the coming Messiah with which the hearts of patriarchs and prophets were made

glad. He set the types of the slain, and risen, and glorified Christ all through the ritual and records of the old economy. He prompted all the prayers of faith, all the confessions of sin, all the seekings after God, from Eden to Bethlehem. He supplied the wisdom for building tabernacle and temple, and for securing the successful rulership of the kingdom. He touched the lips of David and Isaiah, and gave to the church through them a legacy of comforts, and helps, and hopes, which all the centuries cannot exhaust. More than this. He shared the humiliation of him who was born in the stable, and shared it as the supreme agency by which God and man became one for the salvation of the lost. He had to do with every utterance of that Saviour when he spake as man never spake, with every invitation, promise, benediction, denunciation; and with every deed of beneficence, every sign and wonder as well. He was an outcast equally with the despised Nazarene. He felt all the insults, all the opprobrium, all the scorn of which Jesus was the continual object. He felt the pangs of the garden, the shame and anguish of the cross. For he pitied, he loved men even as Christ, and he was with the all-enduring one to the end. Nay, more: he quickened the lifeless body in the tomb of Joseph, clothed it with the glory of the resurrection, and the higher glory of the ascension, and now is in the world, filling the place of our absent Lord, and with all his infinite knowledge, and wisdom, and power, is carrying the gospel scheme to its appointed issue. What a wonderful source of confidence, what a prodigious guaranty of success we have then in this doctrine of the Spirit. Here is he who from the beginning has known and had to do with everything pertaining to this work of saving men, who fathoms all the plans, and machinations, and secret thoughts of the arch-adversary, who possesses in himself all the measureless resources of the Godhead, and whose most intense desire and purpose are centered in the final exaltation of Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords.

OUR SYMPATHIZERS.

And let us remember that we are not alone in this great conflict with the powers of darkness. Above us, crowding the very vault of heaven, is a mighty cloud of witnesses. Patriarchs, prophets, kings — the innumerable company saved by a gospel that they knew only in type and shadow, yet rejoiced in — are there. And there are apostles, evangelists, teachers, whose delight was in witnessing this gospel, and who counted it a divine privilege to share their Master's reproaches, and lay down their lives in his behalf. There, too, is the gathered host of those missionary toilers who, in later years, faced dungeons and stakes, and savage hate and cruelties, that they might make known the tidings of salvation, and whose bones whiten to-day on the soil of every continent beneath the sky. And there, mingled with all these, is the countless throng of angels whose supreme joy it is to know of the victories of the cross. What a glorious fellowship is this, bending eagerly over the battlements of heaven, full of ardent sympathy with our aims, sending down, as it were, their words of cheer, and with palms in their hands inciting us to deeper zeal, and waving us on to victory! Yes, and above them all, more interested than they all, there flashes the vision of One with feet as burnished brass, with eyes as flaming fire, whose countenance is as the sun shining in its strength, and whose voice is as the sound of many waters. The prints of the nails are still in his outstretched hands; the scars of the thorn-crown are still discernible on his brow. And as I look, his lips part, and there comes to my ears the message: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations; and lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world."

Oh, my brethren, gathered in such a presence, waiting with one accord in one place, waiting with urgent and tearful pleadings of the promise yoked to this divine command, why should there not come upon us the baptism of the Pentecostal fire? Nay, why should there not be born of this meeting a missionary spirit, a divine passion for souls,

that should lead on an era of Pentecosts to be repeated, and re-repeated with ever widening range and waxing power, until that one blessed day, for which through weary centuries this tossed and groaning earth has waited, and God has waited, and the crucified and risen Redeemer has waited, shall be ushered in — the kingdom of Christ come, and the glory of the Lord cover the earth as the waters cover the sea!

"Thy Neighbor as Thyself."

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD AT

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, OCTOBER 2, 1883.

BY

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SERMON.

"THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF." *Mark xii: 31, Leviticus xix: 18.*

MEN AND BRETHREN: In announcing this plain sentence as the text of the following discourse, allow me the privilege of an introduction to it in the use of a somewhat violent supposition. Let Christianity be withdrawn. Suppose that instead of being here tonight with our eyes on the map of the world, forming plans for its conversion to Christ, there is no Christ nor Christian Church. The gospel is no more. The vexations of the learned over miracle and inspiration are at an end; the rivalries of the sects have gone down in a general indifference; missions are abandoned, reform has become impotent, in so far as it depended upon the Christian dynamic. What would be left? The world would still be here, as firm under the human foot as ever; day and night, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest would not cease. And man as a moral being would be here, behaving as he has behaved where the gospel has not corrected him. Under the One who is over all, law would still be here, reigning unto life and death, over all who by their very make find themselves its natural subjects. The gospel of Christ not having made the world, nor human nature, nor enacted the great law of right and wrong with its award and doom, these things would still continue under its supposed withdrawal.

Judging from what has occurred, one thing would noticeably characterize the world without the gospel — a lack of neighborly thought and feeling. If a Greece should have a more elevated life by a culture in the beautiful, she would be found keeping it to herself. If a barbarian desired a painted Hebe to refine his taste, or a sculptured Jupiter to embolden his manner, he must go to Greece for it. If a Plato has a superior thought, those outside the Greek colonization must translate it for themselves. To the poor no Plato is preached. If Asia should have any light on conduct or

destiny, it is light for Asia, not for the world. The great wall of China has not only kept Tartar invasion out, it has kept Confucian wisdom in. Keep the world as it was, touching the neighborly virtues, and while at this late date, a European might be found going to one foreign land to sell knives, and to another to buy tea, an American sailing here to sell wheat, and there to buy silk; yet of nation entering nation on no other errand than one of good will, we should see and hear nothing. The historic fact is, the Buddhists and Confucians never came near us, nor our ancestors, with their celestial wisdom. The fine sentiment of Epictetus, "I am a man and nothing of humanity is alien to me," died as it was born, a fine sentiment. It never sent Rome out upon any errand in behalf of humanity. The prominent missionaries of an earlier time were Xerxes's fire-ships, and Cæsar's eagles.

Let us now suppose that this world which, historically, seems to be so much more easily moved by its natural antipathies than by its natural sympathies, should somehow get possession of the command which furnishes the text. Come from where it may, its arrival could hardly pass without exciting some interest. Granting that the hostile passions are more vigorous than the amiable affections, man has some amiable affections, and as sure as he has a heart within him and a neighbor without him, at some time he must come to some consideration of this text. Had these words been first picked up on a stray piece of paper, without any impressive surroundings, without anything urging men to investigate their origin, they would have brought with them a certain undefined authority. The very words suggest that their author knows this present world, knows its inhabitants, their character, their proclivities, their chief ailment as a race, knows also what would promote their general well-being.

But, while this supposition of the anonymous and accidental origin of the law may kindle our interest in its appearance among us, it must not keep us from an examination of its real origin and import. Much as we value a command carrying its authority in its own contents, we value, in an equal degree, a command laid on by a lawful authority; that is, by one with the ability, the opportunity, and the disposition to exercise authority. It is from such a source that this law of our common life professes to reach us. It is first quoted from the book of Leviticus, xix: 18, where it stands as follows: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord."

Whether of any use or not, this authority goes with the law; whether what is here claimed for the law can be established or not, one thing is clear, the law and its proclaimed authority go together. What reveals the one reveals the other; so, if this rule of conduct is an invention and no revelation, the inventor of the good rule is also the inventor of the bad authority; for bad it is, if there is nothing in it but the word of a man.

Where the law stands in Mark's gospel, it is in the following connection: "And one of the scribes came and having heard them reasoning together asked him: Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." Here we are to notice that these two commandments are not linked together in the Pentateuch, as they are in the gospels. The law of love to God is quoted from Deuteronomy, the law of love to the neighbor from Leviticus, where it is inserted among certain miscellaneous prohibitions. Our Lord, however, makes no distinction between those books, calling them both the law; and, from them, republishing these two commandments (evidently worded at different times, and promulgated in different circumstances), and under His own seal distinguishing them as the first and second commandments. He volunteers the further sanction that they cannot be excelled. Strictly viewed, the text is this second commandment according to our Lord — a rule of life touching our neighbor, than which none can be greater. And, in preaching upon it, my first business is to define its terms, in so far as the purposes of this discourse call for definition; and in the next place, to consider the law thus defined, as it bears upon the cause before us tonight.

A law, or as this is called, a commandment, is a precept uttered by authority for the conduct of those under that authority. It is not a mere precept, however; it is that, but more: it is an injunction assuming and affirming an obligation to obey. Moreover, it is attended by a sanction of reward to the obedient, and a sanction of punishment upon the disobedient. This law of love to the neighbor has all these characteristics. It comes to those under it without

any advice to try it by way of experiment, comes as an injunction, to live in a certain way; it is an imperative, objective, unalterable, statute law. A personal ruler, claiming to be the Lord, says to his personal subject: "Thou shalt." Here the right to command is asserted; the obligation to obey is anticipated; the sanctions on obedience and disobedience implied. "Thou shalt love." The extraordinary nature of such a command becomes clear as we get the sense in which "love" is employed in the explanatory clauses of the law. "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind . . thou shalt not stand against the blood of thy neighbor . . . thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him; thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

"Thy neighbor," and who is my neighbor? That is explained for us by the Divine Commentator in the tale of the Good Samaritan, in which he shows that the neighbor is not merely the next dweller — the nigh boor — not one of the same nation, race, or religion as myself; but a human being anywhere I may find him, and in any condition in which I can do him good. I am distinctly told to "go and do" what I can for him; and the man I do this for, has an evidence in my action that I have the true idea of neighborhood.

"Love him as myself." Does this mean that I am to love my neighbor with exactly the same kind of love as I show to myself? That cannot be, because my neighbor is not myself; nor have I the same care of him as I have of myself. I am peculiarly intrusted with my own self-hood; and it is impossible to share my duty to myself with those around me. If it is selfish to have this peculiar care of my own self, it is just as selfish in me to be a self; that is, to have a personality distinct from every other personality. Does it mean then that I am to share equally with my neighbor whatever I possess? "To keep this law," a critic says, "I ought to give the first beggar I meet the half of my money, the half of all I have." But in this assertion the critic makes more than one mistake. For, in the first place, by what he says, he assumes that I have all the money I possess to myself, and am to spend it on myself; the proposed division is not exact, then, if I do not hold all my money to be spent on myself. Further, why should the first beggar I meet get the half; that would leave only the half of what is left for the next object of charity. Besides, one has neighbors other than the utterly needy, to whom something is due; and to divide

instantly all one owns would leave the giver without the means of a sustained benevolence. Again, there are those with claims on our love that are not satisfied by anything divisible; — neighbors whose interests are wider than their present needs. Moreover, there are other laws than this to obey; and it will not show a very thoughtful consideration of their claims, if one's means of action are depleted at the proposed rate. The good Samaritan whose praise is on every tongue reserved enough of his fortune to meet the future of his wounded neighbor. "Take care of him," said he, as he met the present charges, "and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee." The plain truth is, the love here demanded for the neighbor is neither love of exactly the same quality as we show to ourselves, nor love in exactly the same quantity as we show to ourselves; but we are to love the neighbor with as just a proportion of love toward him as we show to ourselves. We are to do for him as we would do for ourselves. We are not to defraud, nor injure, nor suffer sin upon him; more than that, we are to do him all the good that we have opportunity to do, caring for his interests as we care for our own, and promoting his well-being as we promote our own.

To the bearing of this law upon the conversion of the world to Christ, we now bend our consideration.

First, it is great account to us in this work, simply as a law; that is, as already defined, a requirement evoking the feeling of obligation, and accompanied by sanctions adjusted by the lawgiver. The requirement now upon us we find awaiting us, enacted before we are born; and the moment we come to understand it we all alike become aware that we ought to obey it. This we consider an arrangement of great advantage for the law itself; for the subjects of it; and for the object of it. Let us look first at the advantage coming from the independent origin of the law. Herein is secured its dignity, stability and far-reaching efficiency. Whatever may change this cannot change: "The foundation of God standeth sure." Those under it not enacting it, they cannot abolish it; not framing its obligations and sanctions, they can neither deny nor avoid them. Emanating from the author of their life, this law for the direction of that life cannot but commend itself as fit and proper, to all who acknowledge their Maker's right to direct the lives that he has created. Indeed so reasonable and natural does it appear to those for whom it is enacted, some have

been led to propose an origin for it in the human race itself. They suggest that the intuition of our obligation to obey it has come to us by way of the good that it has brought to our ancestors. Somehow by inheriting its effects in them, we now start with our present spontaneous allegiance to it in our thought and conscience; so that we need not dignify nor empower this law with any such origin as the Bible claims for it.

On this let it be said that we are keenly alive to the importance of the great doctrine of heredity, and we are grateful for its aid in explaining the course, if not the origin, of a great deal that calls for explanation. But this proposal, to find an origin for this law by heredity, does not commend itself to us, as being in that ordinarily lucid way of accounting for things. As the dignity and force of this law is largely dependent upon the truthfulness of its own claim to be a divine law, with no ordinary interest we ask, How did our ancestors come to beget in us what, according to this theory, they had not in themselves? For, at one time, the supposition is, this was not an intuitively righteous law, it has only become so by long practice. And, granting, that by slow degrees, the human race has worked itself up from Cain's sullenness, and "Am I my brother's keeper?" to Moses' good sense, and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," may we ask what had the race been doing in the manufacture of moral intuitions between Moses and Christ, that He, the best judge of our humanity, after thousands of years, said there was nothing to revise or improve in that piece of legislation? And, moreover, since his name and opinions have such weight in the world, is it out of place to ask, on what did Christ base his assertion that this law cannot be excelled? Why should a progress in moral ideas be arrested at this point?

But, of all our needs of explanation upon the tracing of this command to a purely human origin, is the relation of this theory to the facts of life, as they face us now. Confessedly, the world's idea of this law, and the world's assent to its claims, are far ahead of its practice of them. And, in so far as history shows, it has ever been so. Our trouble is this, if it was by the discovered excellence of the law's working that our present intuitions have become part of ourselves, where are those creative virtues nowadays that they do not stand by the intuitions of their own creation? Whence the wail of humanity that it knows the right so well, yet follows the wrong? May our ignorance be borne with as we fur-

ther ask: How can that be, if it was solely out of its own experience of the right that this intuition of it is now the property of race? And, what is the explanation of the singular fact, that the law of heredity acts so faithfully in the transmission of the intuition, and so unfaithfully in the transmission of the performance, or more strictly, the power of performance; especially since out of the long and successful performance, the universal and unerring intuition came. The average man, with his inherited idea of the whole as greater than a part, has along with it seemingly inherited a corresponding obedience to it. May we ask why the same undeviating moral action is not a joint heir with the moral intuition, since both moral and mathematical ideas are supposed to be formed by the same process — a rational "will" being excluded from that process, as rigidly as a series of purely mechanical sequences can exclude it.

But, according to the Scriptures, and to our advantage, as subjects of the law, we are delivered from all uncertainty respecting its origin and foundation. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good," and in doing so, he said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor." The very sound has the blessing of the imperative in it — even the imperative of the Supreme Love. Under it, we are freed from the degrading idea of being in a tyranny of drift, and also from the petty tyrannies of our own moods. Our obedience is not left to our own changing sensibilities; to our own hesitating inferences, from our own imperfect inductions; nor to the next novel observation any man, or any age, may make on what we ought to do. Indeed, one mark of this law's divinity and one secret of its power, is the absence from its terms of all secondary considerations why it should be obeyed. In the Old Testament it has the name of the Supreme Lawgiver appended to it; in the New Testament it has Christ's indorsement; and thus it stands in command of what of all things a man supposes he has the right to control for himself — his love. Does one say, "I have few neighbors who will love me in return, and why should I love them?" Does another say, "No neighbors ever loved me, and why should I love them?" Do some say, "There are whole tribes of neighbors who show nothing in them worth the loving, why spend or be spent for them?" Do others say, "Whole nations of neighbors have we, well enough off as they are, why go offering them our love?" One and all have their answer here, there is nothing in the law — that is, in the sim-

ple imperate — that consults any man's peculiarity of position, knowledge, feeling, judgment, taste, or opinion — not even his belief, his hope, or his most exalted surmise. This, to some, may sound like despotism. It does; for it is despotism, but of the most gracious sort, the despotism not of Force but of Love. The more of its own way it has, the greater the blessedness of being under it. For, what can equal that subject's privilege, who is under a law of love; with a Lawgiver over him who is nothing but love; who so hems him in to obedience, that he finds his very nature wronged, if it is not allowed to obey; who lets him see, in every contemplated escape from love's control, only a prophecy of his own wretchedness. In fact, if despotism is insisted on in the obligation to love, then every one is his own despot; for every one lays it on himself. If there is any better way of accounting for this than that under the adorable Sovereignty of God, man is made in the divine image, we wait to hear it. As it is, it seems to us that the reflection of the Supreme Love in man, thus justifies itself, by the reflection of the Divine Reason, also in him by his Maker's will.

As we leave this aspect of the law to the obedient, let us notice how its authorized expounders check any possible thought of soaring over it. "I have not found so great *faith*, no, not in Israel," said Jesus of a man who showed that he knew what *obedience to authority* meant, and what it would effect. And in the coronation hymn of Love, as chanted by Paul, all gifts and graces are reduced to nothing, if love does not animate them. And, in the same vein of suggestiveness upon the value of a loving law revealed for conduct, is the apostle's remark upon some who were inclined to let it go for a more spiritual guidance. "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things that I write unto you, that they are the commandments of the Lord." In view of this discouragement to fanaticism, this repression of excess, this reduction of eccentricity to regularity, through a spread of love by law, it is singular that those who have made a business of showing such love, have had to bear the reproach of being fanatical, and extreme, and eccentric. Missionary societies have been stignatized as companies of the mildly fanatical, engaged in sending out "small detachments of maniacs," for the disturbance of nations in the infantile innocence of a primitive civilization. Where this law of love to the neighbor reigns, of all sober-minded, orderly, law-abiding communities, a missionary gathering

is the one that might be expected to escape the contempt of eccentricity.

Time does not permit enough to be said upon the value of this command, as a statute law in the prosecution of our great work. Like the banyan tree, this commanded love, as it spreads, lets down its own supports. Those reached by it, cannot but be favorably impressed by a goodness that blesses them by commandment. By that fact they are taught that the same law is over themselves; and that all their neighbors are the objects of a like love from them; and, by consequence, these neighbors are bound to turn towards them with a like love. How benign is that goodness, which in commanding me to love my neighbor as myself, commands every neighbor I shall ever have, to love me as himself, "obliges him to love me, authorizes him as my keeper, arms him as my defender, pledges him as my surety, adorns him as my example, couples him as my co-heir," both of us heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ. Behold! what manner of love is this! Behold! what manner of law is this! Must they not have their origin in Him, in whom Law and Love are one — even God!

I remark, in the next place, that this law of love to the neighbor is of interest to us in the work before us, as a law of progressive application. The value of the law, as imposed by the Supreme Love, we have just considered. Of great advantage it is, to have the duty of love based in the Unchangeable and the Eternal. "I am the Lord," lays down the ordinance for our obedience at the origin of things. And there the one unvarying factor of the law rests.

But we are now at a turning-point in our meditations upon the text. We have to take up aspects of it that have blessings of another sort than the blessings of immutability. There is the blessing of change in the number and positions of the objects on which to fasten this commanded love. True the words "change" and "progress" are not in the commandment; but the things are there. The Lord, whose law it is, has a providence which enlightens us on a great deal of his legislation; and Providence assures us, if we need any assurance, that this law is anything but a barren imperative, suggestive only of a stationary, mechanical obedience. Along with "love," the substance of the law, stands "thy neighbor," the object of the law; and no obedience is possible without attention to him; for since "love" is essentially communicative, to say that a neighbor is loved and yet nothing

is done for him, is a contradiction. Broadly viewed, our neighbors are our living fellow-men; the dead are gone from the same conditions of existence as ourselves, and hence are beyond our reach. With the dead the distant used to be classed; but not now; for by the progress of events, all the living, if not within our reach, are within our influence, and when we will, we may do them good. It is not a fanciful anticipation of this fact, we trust, but a real one, that we see in our Lord's exposition of the word "neighbor." In his inquirer's mind there seemed to be no thought of the widening that the Saviour gave it. Exclusiveness, once the Jew's antidote against his circumstances, had become the bane of his culture; and that a contiguous Samaritan might be neighbor to him was a revelation indeed. But why wonder at the Jew, O we of little faith. Who among ourselves, until an expanding providence had made the world one neighborhood of nations, believed that the world had in it what Jesus has taught to be in it. "Not to me only." "He hath broken down the middle wall of partition. . . . Ye are therefore no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints." "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free." These sayings from Paul, and the late confession from Peter, "Now I see that God is no respecter of persons, but that in every nation men may be accepted of Him"—even the Saviour's own words, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," had all to be followed up by an interpreting providence, before the church stood face to face with the fact, that the whole world is open to neighborly approach; and that into the whole world, in order to reach every creature, this loving law is ordained to go. But geographical distance is only one separating thing, that has virtually gone: separating prejudices of race, color, caste, and degrees of culture are following. The essentials of manhood are fast becoming the simple and universal constituents of neighborhood, and these more modern changes mean something in the bringing of humanity to Christ, even as their preceding geographical changes meant something.

But, in the utterance of the law, the pronouns "thou" and "thy" call us back to personal duty; yet, as we see, to personal duty with a world before us, awaiting the offices of love, and since from the nature of the case, the one cannot touch the all, counsel must be taken upon some limit to the numbers reached. If we

can learn anything from those first sent out among the nations, we may have some light on our present duty. Turning to the times in which the earnest of this neighborhood of nations came, we watch with intense interest the direction given to those who went out, not to give society new socialisms, nor politics new adjustments, not to attack kings and great corporations, but to take mankind neighbor by neighbor, and bless each, as the bearer of the new love was blest himself. The same question must have faced the Pauls and Barnabases as faces us. With our one life to spend on the whole, where shall we go; and why to one place rather than another? The beginning was Jerusalem, but, tracking the first missionary's steps, we see them in the north and west of Asia Minor. Back to the starting-place, confirming as he goes, the pioneer of all our missions went. And then comes a new lesson; this time on where not to go. He assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered him not. Under better guidance than his own, he is kept from wandering along the shores of the Black Sea, and (I speak as a man) likely to be shut up in the wilds of the Caucasus, where neighbors were few and far between. Instead of this, he is drawn back to the center and brought to Troas. Beside the Ægean Sea he was further prepared to speak to the very largest numbers of the very best minds the world then contained. Witness the outcome of his third missionary journey. Back to Greece he had to go; for Corinth and Athens had to know of a wisdom not of this world. The fact is, the apostle of the Gentiles spent his missionary life mainly where population was densest, where intellect was at its best, where most neighbors could be reached, and neighbors too, whose influence would be the widest over others. Prisoner as he was left in Rome, it was as a missionary prisoner, whose neighborly love found a way through those shackled to him, into Cæsar's household. And, it is in imitation of this that the church has continued to send her missionaries into the great meeting-places of man. India, touching Burmah on the east, Thibet on the north, and Afghanistan and Persia on the west — China with Further India on the south, Mongolia on the north, Japan and the islands that no man can number, off her eastern coast — Turkey, dense with the hosts of Islam — Africa, isolated in a solitary grandeur, yet made neighbor by the rapacities of many lands, teeming with millions, of all races the one susceptible of love — these great centers of humanity are the coveted

among the mission fields, as they ought to be, since in them and from them, may more love be spread, by those who have but one life to give, and one generation to serve, according to the will of God.

And, upon our love to those not within our reach, let me say, we can miss bestowing it, only by withholding it from our effort to reach them. By the progress of civilization, if I pay a certain sum of money into a bank in this city, or pass my intention to pay it, that money or that intention, is at my desire reproduced in Calcutta, to the very mill of the amount, to the very date of my thought of payment. Commercially, it is understood that what is done here, is done there. And the personality of missionary endeavor may be looked at in some such way. What we send, will go. If we give money, the money will do money's work in the person of our commissioner; if we give no love, that is, good will, no earnest desire, prayer, solicitude for the neighbor himself, the neighbor is not reached. The intention not being forwarded, it cannot be presented to the correspondent. Let no one say, then, that he cannot reach a neighbor because he cannot go himself. In these days of progressive appliances he can do what can be done, what is done, what must be done, if this and many a law besides, are to be kept in their spirit, as well as in their letter. Let the heart, desirous to express its love, know that the same advancing providence that brought the neighbor near, has brought just as near the means to bless him. And shall we forget that we have a life in a realm, where a thought may bless another heart without a metallic wire to carry it; a realm in which, "through the Eternal Spirit," the heart's desire and prayer may be sent to distant empires without an audible word.

But that I may further expand the preceding thought let me remark on the interest this law has to us as a law of varying adaptability. Robert Moffat, lying prone on the clay floors of the Bechuanas, becoming all but one of them in their low estate, that he might lift them up to a Christian manhood; David Scudder, studying Indian philosophy at Andover, that he might on landing in India, bring a sharpened intellect into contact with Brahminical acuteness; Bridgeman, in the thick of Asiatic ferments; and Livingstone, praying in loneliness by his African bedside, illustrate the variety of adaptations that may be called for, under the one unvarying appeal for love to the neighbor as the neighbor is found. And

not only have the numbers and the positions of the law's objects changed, but as we understand the terms of the law, we are personally enjoined not to be contented with one adaptation of blessing to the neighbor, but to change our manifestations of blessing as we are changed ourselves. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But no man is the same self in one given year, that he is in another. His fortune has changed, his position, his influence, above all, his character is changed; his beliefs, his hopes, his visions of the future, and his power further to believe, to hope, to see, are all of a higher or lower type; and the same self not being present, neither the same proportions, nor the same manifestations of love to the neighbor, are either demanded or rendered.

This, of all aspects of the law, is perhaps the most taxing and the most searching to the individual subject; for it invests him with the measure of his own obedience, and cites him into his own presence to adjudicate between himself and his neighbor, in a claim of love. As we understand it, by this feature of the law, we are not at liberty to remain in ignorance of our neighbors' condition. If we do remain in such ignorance, it must be for a reason which we must report to ourselves, and we shall not stand high in our own esteem, if we dread the truth, lest it may cost us something to relieve the necessities, or share the ills, or pity the misfortunes, of those on the same plane of moral being as ourselves. Moreover, we are to give him the benefit of a new method of blessing even if it is an innovation upon the methods that blessed ourselves. If our present power to bless is greater than that of our past, even though that past had blessing enough for ourselves, that may not be enough for those we can reach now. A love that is not blinded by an intellectual vanity, that sees nothing good in what did not bring us good, will devise the best that can be devised, for the day and the men that now are. Because there were no missionary steamers proposed as an aid to our foreign work forty years ago, it does not follow that we shall have none now. If only a quarter of a million of dollars a year was raised for our general missionary fund a quarter of a century ago, a million a year may be asked now, since three quarters of a million of new reasons for it have appeared.

But while the law, thus understood, enjoins us to adapt our love to all possible forms of blessing, the same love does not allow us to ply the neighbor with novelties by way of experiment, nor to

relegate to a subordinate place, the means of blessing which have been already approved.

This being so, we must insist upon the truth that has saved ourselves, as the main instrumentality in the neighbor's salvation. One most important part of our work has been our missionaries' interest in the Bible, as the power of God unto all the salvation we know. Buildings our neighbors can be saved without; great organizations they can be saved without; almost all external aids to good order they can live without, and have peace, order, good government within. With the word of God, men can live; without it, no people that we know of, have had more than a name to live. By consequence, it never has commended itself to us, as the best that can be done, to varnish a heathen civilization over with a religion of mere ceremonialism, and leave the hearts of the people unregenerated. Contrast Madagascar, and its twenty-five years of earnest culture under the word of God, with Japan in the seventy years of the Roman Catholic possession — from Xavier's entry in 1549 until the persecution in 1620 — but with no Bible translated and put into the people's hands. In Madagascar, after as severe a persecution as modern times have known, including the burning of some and the hurling of others from rocks, at the persecutor's death the Christians were more numerous than before the persecution began; and the Bible, the means of their spiritual life, was still in their hands. On the other hand, in Japan, with a longer time to work in, at the close of a like persecution, the native Christians that were spared lapsed into heathenism, no Bible being theirs as the Holy Spirit's means of sustaining their fidelity to the truth. There seems to be no better explanation than this of the paralysis in the Nestorian effort to convert the Chinese. They had China and Central Asia from the fifth to the thirteenth century; and for two of these centuries, the eighth and ninth, they had in China no obstruction or complaint of proselytism from the government. But the only relic of the Nestorian movement is the tablet of A. D. 781; not a catechism, a liturgy, a law, or a Lord's Prayer remaining, much less any portion of the Word of Life. And the burden of history is the same everywhere; no Bible, no spiritual life; no Christ, no bread of life; no words of Christ, no spirit and life for the soul of man. Left without words "from the mouth of God," trying to live on food alone, man's spiritual vigor soon decreases, and his discipleship is "no more."

From such facts, and from the great principles under which we have been trained into an advancing life, this is clear, that since the world seems created to discipline its inhabitants to goodness, by the helping of one another, in order to render a neighbor a loving service, it is necessary to share with him our very self, at its very best. Only as the whole self gives a share of what it is, and does, and has, and can command, is witness borne to the heart's omnipotence. But when the genuine love is shown by the genuine man, then the Lawgiver shows that his law is like himself, the admiration even of those who own no subjection to it. Hear Hyder Ali, the scourge of the Carnatic, who, according to Mr. Burke, "drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to the arts of destruction, and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation into one black cloud, could hang till the hour of the tempest, upon the declivities of the mountains." This man who, according to the great orator, let down upon the plains of the Carnatic a storm of war and woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived and no tongue could tell — even he, when bringing his enemies to terms in negotiating a treaty, could say: "Send me Swartz; send me the Christian missionary, for him only can I trust." My friends, no matter how black may be men's skins, or how black their hearts, all know the neighbor who has the love commanded in this law. And all men know the worthlessness of a sham love, that comes from an untouched heart. Hence, if Christ is in the love that the heart designs to spread, its first missionary hymn it should sing to itself, and after this manner:

Manasseh, Paul and Magdalene,
All pardoned were by Thee.
I read it and believe it, Lord,
For Thou hast pardoned me.

With a heart thus enriched, the owner of it may go up or down the world, in the belief that others may be blest like himself; and loving them as he has been loved himself, he can be felt as a power for good. Whatever he presses upon his neighbor from that enriched heart will have the relish of salvation in it; for into whatever one has been changed, the neighbor that he loves has his measure of the change imparted unto him. My brethren, we here call to mind the prayer of Him who said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself — that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

But it is time to close, with the mention of one more feature of this law as of interest to us in consulting upon the conversion of the world, namely, that it is a law giving to those obeying it a constant suggestion of success. See of what it is made up — a self — a neighbor, with love between — and God over all blessed forever. There is not one hopeless object of thought in the composition. Here also are the components of all lasting improvement known to us, an eternal and unchangeable basis, and, connected with that, something ever advancing to a better condition. All is not in the immovable past; but something is: all is not in the changing present; but something is: all is not in the visions of the future; but something is. Thus we are held, held fast in God; thus we move, move onward to the better, for ourselves and others. And, as earnests of this law's anticipated subjugations, all grades of mind have already owned its sway. Under it have come down proud states like Rome; under it have been lifted up lowly islands like Hawaii. And, since some have been subdued and elevated, others may be; for almost all sorts of obstructions against Love's reign have been thrust in its way since "Bel bowed down, and Nebo stooped." Yet Love still lives to subdue, to elevate, to inspire, that succeeding generations may know for themselves how to conquer by its power. But, whatever the purpose of its slow and gradual conquest of mankind, looking at it, as something with means and forces in play for an end, there can be nothing before it, but a good law's eventual triumph. Simply as the best we know, coming into contact with the worst possible, it has a promise of overcoming; for doth not Nature itself teach us, that the stronger eventually puts aside the weaker? the living must be victor of the dead. See the green leaf of that plant in the soil, feet deep in corruption, see it come up in the face of the sublime mechanics of gravitation, see it defy all dead things to keep it still a leaf. It has life. And love is life, the life of God, for God is Love. Once all the love there is, was in God Himself; and while in Him it wrought itself out in blessing others equally with Himself, in so far as His opportunities allowed. Under Christ, that divine love shed abroad in our hearts is to find its way out to others, according to our opportunities. The nations, kindreds, tongues, and people are of equal value with ourselves; to love them as such, to draw them to the Saviour, who has saved ourselves, to give them the truth that purifies ourselves, this is the part we have to take, in getting them

clothed in white, to stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Missionaries, Friends of Missions, Lovers of Mankind, I have no closing appeals; my theme admits of none; my aim is simply to leave on the Christian conscience that law than which, according to our Lord, none can be greater. That law is upon us; the nations are our neighbors; the Redeemer is with us. He will be with us "alway, even unto the end of the world," as we fulfill this Eternal Law of his own Eternal Love.

The Chief Incentive to Christian Missions.

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD AT

COLUMBUS, OHIO, OCTOBER 7, 1884.

BY

REV. AARON L. CHAPIN, D. D.

BELOIT COLLEGE, WISCONSIN.

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SERMON.

BUT NONE OF THESE THINGS MOVE ME, NEITHER COUNT I MY LIFE DEAR UNTO MYSELF, SO THAT I MIGHT FINISH MY COURSE WITH JOY, AND THE MINISTRY WHICH I HAVE RECEIVED OF THE LORD JESUS, TO TESTIFY THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD. *Acts* XX: 24.

PAUL of Tarsus has been fitly called "the Apostle of Progress." He was raised up and honored as the chief instrument for the first wide extension of the Christian faith in the world. Having once received for himself the joyful hope of salvation by Jesus of Nazareth, a fire was kindled in his soul of unquenchable zeal, to give to others the truth which he had found so precious. His contemporaries wondered when they saw the young man of high endowments and fairest prospects, by birth a Hebrew of the Hebrews, the son of Pharisees, trained in the severest school of Jewish exclusiveness, and living by choice "after the straitest sect" of the national religion, break the bands of these associations, overcome the race-prejudice born in him, fling away his pride, his aspirations and the honors of leadership among his people, just within his reach, and, from being a mad persecutor of the new sect, go forth its strongest champion, in the face of obloquy and untold perils by sea and land and the malice of men, to tell to the despised Gentiles, in their ignorance, or vain conceit of wisdom, the simple story of the crucified and risen Nazarene.

Reading the narrative of his subsequent career, *we* wonder at his ceaseless activity, at the wide range of his journeyings, at the joy and cheerfulness which characterize his spirit, and, above all, at the great success achieved, as thousands are converted, churches are organized, and the leaven of the gospel works to transform the temper and habits of men, and to change the phase of the world's civilization. Who can measure the influence of that one man, who,

through the Christ that was in him, the hope of glory, saved thousands of souls, and gave a new cast to the whole history of mankind? Who in all christendom does not feel that influence today, in the very atmosphere he breathes, in the thoughts and feelings that possess his soul, and in all the associations of his life? What meaning is there in this organization, or in its operations, what in this gathering of thousands on this occasion, except as we feel and acknowledge the spirit and aims of Paul of Tarsus, the great missionary of the gospel to the heathen world? And how can we better kindle our souls to bear on the work which he so grandly begun, than by studying the springs of his efficiency?

Let us come then into his presence, and hear him speak for himself. He has finished his great missionary tours of which we have record. Once and again has he traversed the provinces of Western Asia, and made the circuit of Macedonia and Greece even unto Illyricum, preaching Christ and him crucified, with a zeal which knew no bounds and was checked by no obstacles. Beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, wearied, in all conceivable perils, in hunger, cold, and nakedness often; through all, his spirit has not wavered, his cheerful activity has not waned, his joy and hope have been full and sustaining and his success has been wonderful. Now, on his way back to Jerusalem, stopping at Miletus, he has sent for the elders of the dear church at Ephesus, and they are around him on the seashore for a tender parting interview. He speaks of his labors among them, alludes to trials already experienced, and to the warning from the Holy Ghost that bonds and afflictions await him on the way he is going, and then from the depth of his inner soul brings to view in the words before us the hidden mainspring of his zeal and devoted service: "I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself so that I might accomplish (or in comparison of accomplishing) my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Here, *in his consciousness of being charged with a momentous service, and in his conception of the nature of that service*, lies the secret of Paul's power and achievement.

1. Note, first, Paul went forth to his life-work, and continued it to the end, consciously *under a divine commission*. He came into the service, not for ends of his own, not impelled by personal ambition,

not asking whether its emoluments would be equal or superior to those of the career he had abandoned, but constrained by the manifested love of Christ, "to live not unto himself, but unto Him who had died for him, and rose again." When it pleased God to reveal in him his Son, it was to him a call through divine grace, that he might preach Him to the Gentiles. As soon as he apprehended the truth that was flashed in on his soul by the light from heaven which overpowered him under the walls of Damascus, he asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" the answer came in the charge to bear to the nations the name of Jesus, and salvation by that name. The service was not forced on him. He was indeed constrained to it, but it was the constraint of Christ's great love, and in love responsive he willingly received the ministry from the Lord Jesus. As a privilege, he rejoiced in it; as an honor, he gloried in it. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God," this is the title he loves best. With what a kind of exultant joy and commanding authority it rings out in the beginning of his epistles. What a glow of enthusiasm, what an inspiration of courage and patient endurance, what an assurance of hope, rising almost into a present triumph springs from the consciousness of being engaged in a ministry received from the Lord Jesus!

2. The second and main thing for us to consider is Paul's conception of the *nature* of the ministry he had received. First, as respects its *method*. It was just to testify, to bear witness, to announce everywhere certain great facts. He was not charged to set forth the secrets of nature in a system of science, nor to publish the profound principles of a speculative philosophy. The facts of his testimony are in harmony with all science and with all philosophy: indeed, in them genuine science and sound philosophy find their culmination. But his duty was simply to affirm truths which he had learned, not by his own research, nor from the testimony of fellow-men, but by revelation from God, a revelation foreshadowed in the ancient Scriptures, a revelation made directly to himself through a startling external manifestation; above all, a revelation confirmed, enlarged, intensified by an inner spiritual experience. The truths so revealed had full possession of his soul. He could no more doubt their verity than he could doubt the fact of his own

existence. Then, what he felt himself charged to do was to declare these things, not in great sermons, not in studied words of eloquence or of astute reasoning, but in all simplicity and sincerity, just as they lay in his own mind. So he writes to the Corinthians: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God; for I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

Another aspect of the nature of his service appears in Paul's conception of the *matter* of his testimony. It was a *gospel*, good news. It proclaimed not stern demands of holy law, not terrible denunciations against abounding transgressions, not dark forebodings of impending evil, but a message of blessing, of hope, of joy, rung out in a world full of wickedness, weariness, and woe. The world was waiting for such a message. Universal humanity everywhere and always needs it, longs for it. Men's tendencies are downwards, pessimistic, bearing on ever from bad to worse and worse. This message comes as a light shining in a dark place. It counteracts the downward proclivities. It kindles hope, and paints a future all bright with the better things in store for them who will receive it. So the basis is laid for an inspiriting optimism, a quickening of the soul's best capacities with glowing aspirations for its highest development, its absolutely best estate.

But it is the kernel, the very substance of the message which best defines Paul's conception of the nature of his service. "The gospel of the grace of God" — the *grace of God*. We are all familiar with this phrase. Its frequent recurrence in Paul's writings has made us so. Yet very often, I apprehend, it sounds in our ears and drops from our lips with slight impression of its deep, rich meaning. To Paul's apprehension, these three words embodied all blessings — the summum bonum — the supreme good for men. He could never tire of the glad announcement. It was his life-work to ring the changes on this grandest of truths. There was no exhausting the theme. His testimony came out of the depths of his own soul. "By the grace of God I am what I am." This was the spring of all that he knew of joy or hope. It was a spring full, ever flowing — a well of water in him springing up into everlasting life.

The *grace of God* — I can attempt here no unfolding of the

precious theme; but, for the object I have in view, I must linger on it long enough to notice distinctly a few salient points of truth which it includes. They come before my mind in successive pictures. First, there is the *occasion* for the grace of God, as it appears in the moral wreck which sin has brought upon the noblest product of God's creative power — man, formed in the image of God estranged from his Maker, dead in trespasses and sins; and the whole creation groaning under the bondage of corruption; the individual soul out of harmony with itself, its tastes depraved, its judgments right but its choices all wrong, therefore burdened with a sense of guilt, restless, unsatisfied, utterly helpless to restore itself; human society like the sea under a fierce tempest, tossed unceasingly by conflicts of selfish passion, scarred all over by the violence of hatred and oppression, sights and sounds of misery everywhere. How the phases of this sad picture turn up all along in Paul's writings, as he testifies the gospel of the grace of God, how deep and strong the shading as he writes to the Romans, using the Psalmist's vivid colors. Yet our consciousness and observation attest that the case is not overdrawn. There is desperate occasion for a divine interposition, a pressing need of help for you and me and for all our fellowmen. The preaching which ignores or blinks this dread fact is not testifying the gospel of the grace of God.

Next, comes to view the *source of help*, in the heart of God — the great Father-heart, swelling with love — love the prime attribute, the very essence of deity, love full of tender compassion, pitiful towards the wretched, merciful towards the guilty, patient, long-suffering towards the willful and perverse; love enwrapping the very throne of universal sovereignty, tinging the dazzling glory of infinite majesty with softening hues of attractive beauty, veiling without concealing the rigid pillars of eternal justice, beaming forth upon a guilty world the blended rays of severity and goodness in full power to break, and warmth to melt, and light to win sinful hearts; love from before the foundation of the world, contemplating the ruin it could not forestall, with wisdom planning for its restoration, steadily unfolding the plan, giving it application in divers forms down through the ages; love all-embracing, absolutely free, subjectively, in the divine thought, unlimited, restricted only by the free choice of its objects; love particular, personal, reaching with a father's yearning after the return of individual prodigals, and joy-

fully welcoming to the home of assured blessedness each penitent child, and then enfolding him in a union forever inseparable. How cheering the counterpart to the dark picture of sin and death, which appears in the bright climax of Paul's testimony to the Romans: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus."

And now comes before us next, the great *exponent* which defines and measures the love of God in the dispensation of his grace — the crucified Christ — the cross which Paul so loved to contemplate, which was the burden of his testimony, in which, above all things else he gloried — the cross, emblem of divine self-sacrifice, mysterious, measureless — the cross on which is emblazoned the righteousness of God, as the ground of his mercy; the cross, sign unmistakable of hatred and malice gendered by sin in human hearts, met by God's forgiving love; the cross, turned Godward, the essential means of propitiation through the blood of Him who hangs thereon; the cross turned manward, presenting Him who knew no sin, made to be sin in our behalf, the supreme expression, the mighty power of divine love to subdue enmity and reconcile the world unto God. The figure of the Son of Man thus lifted up stands out in the words of Jesus himself, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It stands in the same light as Paul testifies, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." And more distinctly does it appear as John writes, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." This is the truth which gives significance and grandeur and saving effect to the scene on Calvary, toward which the eye of Christian faith has been turned through the centuries, never in vain. Apart from that exhibition, none of us can truly understand or feel the grace of God. We need to gaze upon this picture till we get a clear view of the glory of Christ's person as the Son of God, of the purity and beneficence of his life as the Son of Man, of his deep humiliation in the identification of his spotless innocence with sin and sinners, and of the nature and bearing, hinted at, but not fully unfolded, of the great

sacrifice of atonement made "that God might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Then can we understand what Paul means when he speaks of "the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus." Surely the preaching that veils or explains away this exponent of divine love, is not testifying the gospel of the grace of God.

Another phase of the grace of God we have to notice. It cannot be pictured to the eye of sense. It is a process carried on, a result accomplished in the secret recesses of the soul. It is the grace of God in *application*, through the still agency of the Holy Spirit. The desperate wickedness of men's hearts makes this agency indispensable. The great love of God has made provision equal to the necessity. The Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father according to the promise of the Son, is abroad in the world plying human hearts. His ways are mysterious, unseen as the viewless wind. We know this transforming power, effecting a new birth of the soul, only through our own consciousness of its inworking, or, as one and another tells his experience. The disclosure thus made accords with the promise of our Lord which sets forth a twofold office of the Holy Spirit, viz., to convict of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come, and to take the things of Christ and show them with vivid saving effect. This agency of divine love adapts itself to different conditions of individual souls, with their diverse temperaments, so that in no two cases is the process precisely the same. The conviction sometimes seizes the soul with a sudden shock, sometimes it is effected by strokes and stages, gradually developing a conscience sensitive and all-controlling. Sometimes the things of Christ are presented almost as a new revelation, ravishing the soul with ecstatic joy; sometimes in continued quiet contemplation they steal in more and more, till they pervade the whole being with the Light of life. However varied the steps of the process, the results produced are essentially the same. They appear in the precious fruits of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance," which perfect character, and adorn the life. The picture which represents this feature of the grace of God must be one showing these results. It may be the demoniac, subdued, sitting by the Saviour's side, clothed, and in his right mind, or it may be John, the son of thunder, transformed into the disciple whom Jesus loved, resting on

the bosom and breathing in, that his life may ever exhale the spirit of his Master.

The true outcome of the grace of God, applied, appears in the Christian graces which attest that "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God aforetime prepared that we should walk in them." In the second chapter of his letter to the Ephesians, we have a striking example of the manner in which Paul interweaves this work of the Spirit into all his testimony, showing that to his apprehension, the gospel of the grace of God was the gospel of the Holy Spirit, no less than the gospel of Christ.

There is one more aspect of the grace of God to be noticed. It is its *universal diffusion*. As we catch the great promise and prophecy of the gospel, we have before us the bright vision, yet to be realized, of a world delivered from its bondage of corruption, full of peace and joy under the sway of love. The grace of God applied to individual souls is the mustard seed dropped into the soil of earth, the leaven hidden in human society. The seed will germinate and grow into a wide-spreading tree; the leaven will diffuse itself till the mass of mankind is pervaded and transformed. What changes have passed upon the spirit and intercourse of men since the gospel began its course! What checks have been laid upon the rule of selfishness! What softening of savage natures! What breaking of the rod of oppression! What relief to woman's degradation! What refinement of home life! What development of honesty, of good-will, of charity! Those things which are most esteemed in the mutual relations of men as true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, are manifestly the product of the gospel of the grace of God. The golden rule of Christ has not indeed yet become universal law, but it has found extended application, and all the brightest, most beautiful things we know of in human character and human associations in the world as it is, are its fruits.

What has been done is but the presage of greater things which are to be. Divine providence subserves the dispensation of grace. Scientific research and inventive genius, as they are multiplying facilities for human intercourse, are contributing, not only to the increase of material wealth, but also to the unfolding of brotherly sympathy and love. The swift current of events the world over, is breaking down barriers that have separated races and nations, and is opening channels for the grace of God to flow freely to all souls

in all lands. When we think what God has wrought during the years that measure the life-time of this Board, and that the gospel of his grace has lost none of its life-giving energy, the vision of its glorious triumph in a world redeemed, seems not far away. It is near enough to kindle in waiting Christian souls the fire of Paul's enthusiasm and self-sacrifice.

We are thus brought directly to *the practical lesson* of our subject for this hour. This American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions is simply an organized agency for sending forth, locating, and sustaining witnesses who shall testify in foreign lands the gospel of the grace of God. Its function is not to magnify itself, not to set up a great complicated beautiful machine, and to keep it running smoothly, to the admiration of all beholders — nor is it to form in those foreign lands churches and communities of a certain order, made strong by special bands of ecclesiasticism, with external signs of power and respectability. The history of Christianity shows how early a tendency in this direction was developed, and how blighting to the very essence of the gospel and to its intrinsic power were its effects, as the magnificent hierarchies of the Roman Papal Church and of the Greek Church were built up to dazzle the eyes of men, and to force upon their souls a bondage of superstition which gave scarcely any scope for the still, saving efficacy of the grace of God. Not thus, by observation, comes the kingdom of God which Jesus established upon earth. Its advancement moves on by the direct action of gospel truth on the inner life of souls, and the efficient means is always and everywhere the testimony of those who love the truth, because they have felt its power; testimony to the ear, by word of mouth; testimony to the eye, by the printed page; testimony to the intellect, through processes of education charged with Christian elements; above all, testimony to the heart and conscience by the magnetism of personal character and a pure life, in sweet Christian homes, and in all daily contact with others.

By this central thought of our subject, let the doings of this Board be estimated and directed. Let us have this in mind as we listen to the reports for the year past, and consider operations to be undertaken for the future. Let our sympathies and enthusiasms, as they may be kindled in these various exercises, be gathered to this one head, to magnify the grace of God, to enrich our own ex-

perience of that grace, here and now, and to enlarge our desires and expectations for its rapid communication and application to all peoples of all lands.

But this Board is not a power in itself. It is only a representative agent of the American Congregational churches. Its material resources are what the churches furnish. Its living witnesses are the sons and daughters of these churches. The whole efficiency of this Board depends, therefore, on the measure and tone of the missionary spirit in these churches. This determines the amount of money at its command, and the number and quality of those who offer themselves to publish the gospel, under its direction, and what kind of a gospel they will testify.

Now the whole drift of this discourse points to a *simple, positive, evangelical faith*-as the spring of the missionary spirit. By these terms I mean a faith which seizes and holds as the very core of religion, the grace of God, in the five essential features which have been presented. Whatever strengthens such a faith, strengthens the missionary spirit. Whatever impairs that faith, contracts and blights the missionary spirit. The gospel of the grace of God has been systematized and embodied in creeds and theologies. Something of the kind I suppose to be necessary as a matrix and symbol of our faith; but the framing of creeds and theologies is a human work, and human error is liable to be mingled in the process. The precious gem, the grace of God which bringeth salvation, may be obscured by the framework in which it is set. No doubt the old creeds and theologies do thus, to many minds, obstruct the clear vision of the truth. Some revision is called for, and will be timely. But let it be done reverently, tenderly, carefully, for in these old forms are enclosed the richest jewels of divine wisdom, and under the reckless blows of violent assault there is danger that the jewels will be broken and destroyed. To save these sacred treasures and bring them out with polished brightness into clearer light should be the one aim of every change proposed. And when the new is presented as a substitute for the old, it is fit to ask first of all, not how rational, how logical, how symmetrical is it, but how clearly does it exhibit the gospel of the grace of God, intrinsically one and the same from the beginning.

We look, as the revered John Robinson bade us, for "more light to break forth from the Word of God." And so we bid God speed

to the "*higher criticism*" which opens the seals, and brings out the true light hidden in the sacred oracles. But we need jealously to guard our churches against that destructive criticism which would eliminate from the gospel the grace of God which is its true light and glory. All labor of this kind is properly tested by its fruit, especially in the enlarging or restricting of the missionary spirit. It was my privilege last year in Bonn, to meet Professor Christlieb, who has evinced to the world how well he understands the history and philosophy of Christian missions. Speaking on the point before us, he alluded to a plan just proposed by the rationalistic party in Germany to form a missionary society for the propagation of their peculiar views. The proposition seemed to him absurd, for such negations have nothing in them to sustain a missionary impulse. The movement, he thought, must only fail, and by its failure, illustrate the secret of power in the true gospel. Have not like experiments and like failures in our country proved the same thing? History brings to view two kinds of religious propagandism; the one goes out to fight for conquest and the setting up of a grand worldly power, like an empire of Islam, or a hierarchy of Papal despotism, and its inspiration is an enthusiasm of adventure, a zeal for self-aggrandizement, and a fanatical devotion to a splendid imposition. The other goes forth to break the spell of sin on the souls of men, and to bring them out into the liberty of children of God, loyal subjects of the kingdom of truth and righteousness under the sceptre of Immanuel, the Prince of Peace; and its inspiration is devotion to Him who redeemed us by his own precious blood, and who, by the Holy Spirit, imparts something of his own self-sacrificing love for a lost world. Our Christian work is of this latter kind. The spring of its energy is the hearty faith of our churches in redemption by the grace of God — by that alone.

We have to recognize in these days *currents of skepticism* which pervade the moral atmosphere we breathe. They come from divers sources — materialism in science, rationalism in philosophy, vague speculation in religion, all pushed to extremes, worldliness and sensuality fostered by the rapid accumulation of wealth and the greed for its possession. In its every phase, this skepticism strikes directly at the heart of our gospel. It raises doubts whether sin is such a desperate malady, whether we are shut up to the mere mercy of God for relief, whether Christ on the cross is a sacrifice of propitia-

tion, the indispensable means of our reconciliation to God, whether it is true, as the Master said, that entrance to the kingdom of Heaven is alone by the new birth from above, whether the heathen are in such danger of perishing that it is a pressing duty of Christian peoples to send them the gospel of the grace of God at any cost.

May not these influences account in part for the slow advance of our missionary work? God, in his providence, has gone before us and broken down barriers and removed obstacles, so that all parts of the world are open for the entrance of the gospel, but means and men are wanting to enable us to seize the opportunity. We boast of our national wealth as rolling up by hundreds of millions every year, and a fair proportion of this increase comes into the hands of members of our churches, and yet this Board, for almost twenty years, has been striving hard to add a pitiful one hundred thousand dollars to its reliable income, hitherto without full success. Hundreds of young men go out from our halls of learning every year, and flock into other professions till they are overstocked; but when our secretaries make their earnest appeal, how few are ready to receive from the Lord Jesus a ministry like that which Paul so joyfully accepted and fulfilled.

"When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" Oh, if those who think they have tasted of the grace of God had a faith to apprehend and appreciate that grace as the great apostle did, would it be impossible or even difficult to add a million to the treasury of this Board next year, and to send out a hundred new missionaries to testify the gospel of salvation? Blessed be God this faith is not utterly wanting in our churches. There are rich brethren who, in the love of Him who died for them, give out of their abundance till they feel it, and others who willingly forego the gratification of their tastes and some of their comforts, that they may take part in this ministry, and still many a poor widow, with love and trust, brings and throws into the Lord's treasury all her living. Now and then, too, a young disciple, holding not his life of any account as dear unto himself, responds to the call, "Here am I, send me." These understand that self-sacrifice is a ruling principle in the redemption of this world, and having made themselves

partakers of His sufferings, they come also even now into a participation of the joy of the Lord, the joy of self-sacrifice.

Thankfully we recognize that there is among us a little of this faith. The question of the hour is *how shall it be increased?* How shall these untoward influences be counteracted? How shall the faith of the few be made general, till the souls of all are possessed by it, and the zeal and strength of our churches shall be fully drawn out.

We need, first of all, *a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost*, a Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit of God, to take the things of Christ, and show them unto his own people for a deeper experience of God's saving grace. This will come when hearts are set to long and pray unceasingly for it! We need next, a clearer, more pointed, and at the same time more winning presentation from our pulpits of the simple gospel of sin and grace, such as proceeds from the hearts of men who know its power and preciousness. And then, there is need that the responsibility of testifying the grace of God be distributed and accepted by all Christians. Ministers are expected, of course, to bear witness; but it is the duty and privilege of all to share in the service. The humblest believer may testify, by receiving the grace of God daily in fresh measure, by adhering to it as the spring of his inner life, by exemplifying it in an outward life adorned with its fruits, by speaking of it, in circles large or small of intimates, and by sustaining with prayer and gifts the organized methods of publishing it to the world.

Dear friends, it seems to me we have unmistakable signs that the world is approaching a great moral crisis. A battle, perhaps the last great battle, is not far away in the future. It is to be fought with spiritual, not with carnal weapons. The great adversary is already mustering his minions, and working his subtle forces. Yet the Lord's host is very much at ease in Zion. And now I seem to see our Lord, the Crucified, moving to rally his followers. He comes, not with trumpet call for a grand demonstration, for the first thing needed is not a mass movement. He draws near to each individual disciple, for the real power for victory is the grace of God hidden in each soul. He points downward to the hole of the pit whence each one saved was digged, and asks, "Is it for *thee* a great deliverance?" He points upward to the throne of God, beaming with love whose breadth and length and height and depth

pass knowledge, and asks, "Dost *thou* feel and rejoice in its blessed life-giving beams?" He points to his own five bleeding wounds, the exponent of that love, and asks, "Lovest *thou* me who bore thy sin in my body on the tree?" He looks inward, and speaking to the secret consciousness, he asks, "Hast *thou* felt the silent moving of the Spirit, quickening a new life and imparting joy and peace and the assured hope of eternal blessedness?" He points to the millions sitting still in the darkness and guilt of spiritual death, a part of the world which God so loved, and asks, "Wilt *thou*, as *thou* valuest the grace of God received, share my pity for the perishing, and go forth to testify to them the gospel of the grace of God?" Summing all up in one, to you, dear friend, and to me, he says, "I gave, I gave my life for thee, what hast *thou* given, what wilt *thou* give for me?"

Oh, Christian steward of God's silver and gold; oh, Christian parent, entrusted with children to be trained for God; oh, Christian maiden, gifted with the winning graces of woman's mind and heart; oh, Christian young man, endowed with intellectual power, and scholarly attainments, what answer give *you* to the close, tender question of your Lord? Sharing, each and all, in its unspeakably precious benefits, shall we, dare we, deny or repudiate what we owe to this gospel of the grace of God?

The Witness to the Founders' Faith.

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mis

AT THE

SEVENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD AT

BOSTON, MASS., OCTOBER 13, 1885.

BY

REV. GEORGE LEON WALKER, D.D.

HARTFORD, CONN.

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SERMON.

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them a from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the these all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the pron provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be HEBREWS xi, 13, 39, 40.

BRETHREN AND FRIENDS, — The call which has gathered evening has informed us that this convocation marks the s completed year of the history and work of this America Foreign Missions. A natural instinct in us all, respon arrival of great period-marking epochs, whether in our pe or in the lives of social institutions, has already lent a peculiar interest to the occasion, visible enough in this It has also, to a very considerable extent, determined th of the suggestions which will be presented to you on th evening of our concourse.

As in the individual lives of each one of us, the coming eth, fortieth, or, if we attain unto it, a seventieth birthday fi remembrances of experiences past rather than visions of possibly to come, so to-night it is the fountain of memory, anticipation, which seems mainly to overflow.

At other sessions of this meeting, the forelooking aspect c versary will doubtless be inspiringly presented. Especially is it to know that to-morrow night a master-hand will draw f outlines of the glorious prospect visible from the height to missionary enterprise has already laboriously climbed. But t with something of the fondness of Experience's retrospect us turn to the humbler duty of calling to mind their "faith" before us in this endeavor, "saw" the promises "and gr from afar"; and especially let us try clearly to discern some that "witness" which has been all along borne to their faith has so become, not only a witness to them, but to us an enu certain great guiding principles, which seventy-five years of work have illuminated and emphasized.

To get even a little conception of the fathers' "faith" in *on this enterprise* requires from us, not mere sympathy

only, but some imagination and knowledge also. For although gone only three quarters of a century into the past, theirs was almost another world than ours.

Four young men who, in comparative isolation and obscurity, had been for nearly three years previous thinking and praying over the Master's parting command, "Go, make disciples of all the nations," had, in June, 1810, memorialized the General Association of Massachusetts, assembled that year at Bradford and composed of twenty-eight members, concerning the reasonableness of their desires, and the prospect of their support, in going on a mission to the heathen. Two others would have signed the memorial had it not been feared that the idea of the possible summons to support six missionaries would have at once been fatal to the whole endeavor in the view of the Association. But the Association considered, prayed, and, as we must believe, lifted and inspired by a divinely begotten faith, resolved. A Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions of nine men was then and there designated, five of whom met at the house of Rev. Noah Porter, at Farmington, Connecticut, on the seventh of September following, and organized the Board whose seventy-fifth anniversary we are now celebrating.

So stated, the matter does not seem to us very formidable or the performance itself immensely memorable. But we are told by a competent authority that, while some were delighted and even exhilarated, others regarded the whole enterprise as the "very essence of folly." And not strange was it that many so thought. For how different a world that was, and in what a comparative night of gloom on the whole problem of missionary endeavor it was, that the fathers took their prophetic resolve!

The Federal Union was then a youngling of only twenty-one years. But twenty-seven years had gone since the colonies had emerged from an exhausting war with Great Britain, and the ominous notes of preparation were even now sounding for another conflict only two years further on, which was again to embargo every Atlantic port, and to bankrupt half the industries of the land. What we now exult over as the widespread area of our civilized domain was bordered still by savage tribes no further westward than Ohio. Louisiana, an undivided territory stretching from the Gulf of Mexico to British North America, along the whole course of the waters of the Mississippi and Missouri, had been only seven years before a French colony. California was still a Spanish one, unsought unto as yet even for the hides, a sluggish trade wherein long preceded a search for anything else. The total population, sparsely scattered over the vast regions which our national instincts still lead us rather to grasp than to occupy, was little more than one eighth of that *which now but partially tenants* these wide domains. Wealth was small; *the mines of silver and of gold* unfound and unconjectured; even those

of iron and coal but little discovered or utilized. Not a rod of rai laid on the continent or in the world. Only two or three slow-cree steamboats venturing about the quiet river-waters near Philadelphia New York, with not an expectation in any mind that they could breast Atlantic waves.

And the lands toward which imagination turned as the proper a of missionary endeavor — how comparatively remote, inaccessible, unknown! Distant India; from whose trading settlements answe letters might possibly arrive in ten months or a year, doubly hostil the Gospel by native heathenism and by the jealousy of British merce. Mysterious Africa; continent of obscurity, guarded by p lence, walled along its northern shores by the unshaken bulwark Mohammedan powers, holding even at that moment in chattel bon unrescued citizens of England and the United States, and vaguely kr all along its western shores as the war-ground of savages and the of slaves. Multitudinous China; cut off from religious approacl edicts of exclusion whose resoluteness and strength had only a pa emblem in her circumvallating Tartar wall. Populous Japan; hard yet discriminated in thought from China, and equally inaccessibl Christian entrance. Barbarous Pacific Islands; from whose hc shores returning voyagers brought back tales of cannibalism and d A far-off, shadow-like, portentous, terror-brooded, awful world!

Meantime, not twenty years had gone since, in the home-land of C Britain, with all its advantages of commerce, governmental supren and established wealth, the conscience of the churches began first fe to stir on this subject of missions to the heathen. It was only in that twelve Baptist ministers at Kettering, in Northamptonshire, u in forming a Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Hea The London Missionary Society followed in 1798. The Church sionary Society, with sixteen ministers of the Establishment, was stituted in 1801. The Methodists had for a few years labored ar West India slaves. But so little was generally known or felt o need and nature of missionary work, that, even after the formatic all of the above-named societies, the great East India Company (c tuted in all probability nearly to a man of baptized members o English Church) put on solemn record in memorial to Parliament "the sending of missionaries into our Eastern possessions is the dest, most extravagant, most expensive, most unwarrantable project was ever proposed by a lunatic enthusiast." And it was not until years after the formation of our own American Board that the inte imposed by that company was removed by act of Parliament from *preaching of* the Gospel in the Indian provinces of Christian E

Whatever, therefore, of preparation and example there may h

in the institution of foreign-missionary societies abroad, or of societies in behalf of American Indians at home, or whatever incentive and encouragement may have been derived from the noble spectacle of the Moravian Brethren, anticipating by more than two generations the zeal for souls of any other branch of the modern Church, or whatever quickening on the question of the Church's duty to those destitute of Gospel light may have come from the great revivals which marked the opening of the century, or from the pages of those few magazines in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York which were gathering eagerly and disseminating the new missionary intelligence of the time, still it cannot be denied that the formation here, under the deterring circumstances I have all too feebly indicated, of this American Foreign Missionary Board was an act of signal and far-sighted faith. For, brethren, it must not be forgotten that the act, however feeble in the outward expression, involved the whole future. It was a distinct recognition and acceptance of the obligation to evangelize "the world." It carried with it, potentially, all that has been done, and all that we or those who come after us can ever do, toward the fulfilment of the Master's behest to "preach the Gospel to every creature." And it did this deliberately, intelligently, and with forecast of labor, difficulty, and sacrifice as great, certainly, as the event has realized. And it becomes us to-night to honor and emulate their faith. Well may we write their names in a new eleventh chapter of Hebrews as those who saw the promises, and "greeted them from afar," and trusted in them though "they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth."

But whenever was it in this ransomed, though still groping and benighted, world that real faith lacked its divine witness? Not always, not often, indeed, does faith receive the full promise which it yearns for, however it may "see" it and "greet it from afar." But a witness to its divine quality, an earnest of its sure fruition, that is seldom long wanting. Certainly it was not wanting in this case which we are contemplating to-night.

The fathers did indeed one after another die. Founders, missionaries, patrons of the Board, they passed on. But gradually ere they went, and with increasing fulness ere the latter of them went, came—and came as distinctly as the fiery sign on Abel's accepted offering or Pentecost's surrendered company—the divine testimony to their trust.

Where are now those four doubting applicants for the sympathy of the Christian Church in the longing of their souls to carry the Gospel of their own salvation to alien climes? Gone indeed from human sight, *but beholding ere they went the fast-following* ranks of nearly nineteen *hundred kindred souls, whom their* example inspired and this Board *s sent forth.*

Where are the nine men of this adjacent region of Massachu and Connecticut, designated at first to stand as the churches' r sentatives in the guidance of this enterprise? Passed long since earthly view, but their places filled, in successive companies and ever-widening regions, by the more than six hundred of our chur wisest and best men, clerical and lay, who have been numbered of corporate body from twenty-five States of our broadening land.

The fifty converts from heathenism to the Gospel, which in stood the utmost sum of witness borne to ten years of missionary through agency of this Board — how is their testimony lost in voices of the twenty-three thousand members of Christian chu to-day gathered by its labors on once heathen soil! or in the s of the ninety thousand such, who have been enrolled therein are, most of them, to-night singing round the throne above!

Has the fathers' faith had witness? Ask the three hundred seventy-five thousand pupils who have been taught in schools condu by our missionaries. Open a few of the sixteen hundred and millions of pages of Gospel literature disseminated by this Bo spell out the words of Christ in some of the twenty-five languages dialects in which its messengers tell the story of the cross. *Wit* Whenever was witness more demonstrative and opulent to any a faith on earth?

But the precise quality of this witness which has been t to the faith of those who have gone before us, and especially that a it which makes it illuminative to us for future guidance, will b appear, if, turning from these general illustrations, we look a more carefully at a few definite points of that testimony which t seventy-five years of missionary history have given and certified.

The power of a great Religious Idea to move and hold the intellec heart of men — that is one witness to the fathers' faith which three quarters of a century has made manifest.

A great idea — the Missionary Idea — the idea of the disciplin "all nations," the Christianization of the world, the extension of Kingdom of God throughout all the earth — that, nothing scantier that, is the true missionary thought. No comparatively technical scholastic conception of a gathering out of heathen communiti little companies of the elect — correct as in certain aspects su conception is; of merely saving here and there a few souls eternal loss — noble as that enterprise might be, fills out measure of that missionary idea expressed in Christ's comman "*make* disciples of all the nations — *panta ta ethne*" — or as *the Gospel* representation of the universality of Christ's re *to men.* The "world" is the object of Christ's missio

"all the nations" through his Gospel are to attain to light and grace. The work must indeed begin with the individual convert and with the formation of little companionships of elect souls; but the ultimate aim is the winning of whole peoples to the Gospel, the converting of the nations to Christ.

It is certainly a true, but it is as certainly a far from complete, conception of the aim of the Gospel merely to convert individual souls. Its mission is to penetrate and transform society. Its work is to leaven the whole mass of human interests with a divinely purifying power. It touches every act and every relationship of humanity with a life from above, and interpenetrates all that man can do with a new spirit and a heavenly light. It affects governments, moulds education, rectifies manners, purifies behavior, sweetens fellowship, makes the common ways of men better, healthier, happier, as well as holier. Its endeavor is to realize a divine society, not hereafter only, but on earth. To have the "Kingdom of God" come, not in the skies alone or the future merely, but here and among men. It is, in short, the Christianization of "the world" at which it points and for which it prays. And the prayer it offers is one taught by the Master himself: "Thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth."

And this idea, which is the only one which fits itself to the three-times-uttered missionary command of the Master, or which answers to the historic development of the missionary enterprise — whether in the primitive era, the mediæval period, or modern times — has proved itself to have majestic power to win and hold the thoughts of men. It lacks no element of strength in nerving men to sacrifice or to sustain, to do or to dare.

It dwelt a hundred and fifty years ago, and more than two generations before this American Missionary Board was formed, in the mind of our great Edwards, inciting him to send from his comparative wilderness home at Northampton an appeal for "explicit agreement among God's people in extraordinary prayer for the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth." It expressed itself in the record written by Samuel J. Mills in his diary, while yet an undergraduate in college, "I long to have the time arrive when the Gospel shall be preached to all nations." It found utterance in that declaration of one of the five young men under the shelter of the Williamstown haystack, "that God was always willing to have his Gospel spread throughout the world." And it — nothing scantier, more provincial or technical than it — has been the *mainspring* of the truest missionary zeal always.

And how in these seventy-five years of latest history this missionary *idea has demonstrated its capability* mightily and lastingly to control *that is strongest and best in* the Christian heart! It has reached

out over the hills and valleys and plains of our widening land, wherever the foot of Christian pioneer has gone, has broadened horizon about him with thoughts of a "Kingdom of God" coëxten with all the earth. It has entered the hearts of toiling women remote country farmhouses, and they have dedicated the infants of t cradles, or the unborn infants of their wombs, to the evangeliza of "the world." It has touched young men in school and college, has given them a new object to live for and an inspiration which never waned. It has stood by dying beds, and amid the gathe shadows of mortality has prompted the bestowment of all that life c leave, in futherance of all that life had loved and labored for. It taken possession of families, imparting a missionary character to w households, joining brothers and sisters in the same labors, mak sons succeed to their father's toils, and sometimes grandchildren to t up their grandparents' surrendered work. It has developed itself the Church, modifying the very criteria of proper membership there testing Christian character by loyalty to this Christian enterpr It has reached out on every side, subsidizing commerce, utiliz art, developing literature, compelling the attention of governme winning the interest of the secular press, becoming one of the g ruling ideas of the age, which statesmen, however they may estim must consider, and unbelief, however it may hate, must recognize.

Nor are there signs of decadence in its control. On the contr the Missionary Idea was never in the history of Christianity pervasive or so powerful as it is to-day. Not the primitive period post-apostolic zeal, not the mediæval era of churchly devotion challenge equality with the age in which we live. Wider in the fi of Gospel toil, fuller and more multiform in the agencies employ larger in results accomplished than in either of those two great miss epochs of the past, is the mission enterprise of this hour. We entered, unless all signs deceive, on a period which we may call world-period of missions for the salvation of the world.

Of this, in a narrow way, and in reference to our own Board — agency only among many others, and far from largest among them how does this our anniversary gathering testify! We turn to records of the six earliest annual assemblies of this Board — the priv parlor of some hospitable host gave them ample room. In more t one instance his chambers also lodged the assembled company. N more meetings enlarged themselves to the occupancy of some port of a parish vestry. Not for twenty-three years was hazarded experiment of a public business meeting or entrance for the pur *into* a church-edifice. As we look over the assemblies this *will* gather in this place, as we turn in thought to those over

and in other lands, whose thoughts and prayers are with us here, can we fail to recognize the "witness" borne to the fathers' "faith" in the growth and dominancy of the Missionary Idea to-day?

Again we discern another witness, speaking distinctly out of this seventy-five years of missionary enterprise, in *the illustrated susceptibility of all qualities of mankind to Spiritual Life and to Citizenship in the Kingdom of God.*

Christianity indeed proved this truth very early. It proved it in the Pentecostal illumination of Jews and proselytes; in the conversion of the Roman centurion, the Cyprian proconsul, the Philippian jailor, and especially in the splendid results on Grecian, Roman, and Barbarian soil, of the missionary labors of the great Apostle to the Gentiles.

But we cannot forget with what difficulty to some Christian minds this truth was proved; or how slowly some good men, and even companions of the Lord Jesus, could credit the equal capability of other men to the experiences and privileges of the new Kingdom. And something of like slowness of belief seems to engender always in the minds of any class of men long in possession of the Gospel, so that this truth of the susceptibility of all men, everywhere, to spiritual life and Christian citizenship needs perpetually to be verified.

And what splendid verification it is receiving from every quarter of the missionary field! The proclamation of the Gospel awakens everywhere a substantial identity of inward experience and of outward behavior. Set up the cross on Greenland snows, and its rude form will soon be wreathed with the same blossoms of faith and love which garland it lifted on Syrian soil. Speak to the ebon dwellers of the equator of salvation by the blood of Christ, and they will crave its purifying power as believingly as the Hebrew Apostle who wrote: "the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Proclaim the "Kingdom of God" in China and Japan, and men there will seek citizenship in it, and will manifest loyalty to it and to its King, as earnest and sincere as Netherlandish martyr to the Reformation's faith, or Pilgrim planter of our New England church.

Substantial identity of experience and of behavior is begotten everywhere by the Gospel message. "Substantial identity" I say, for just here it is, perhaps, that our judgment of work accomplished needs most to be generous, and our views of what is to be expected in the future to be enlarged and made catholic.

For, my friends, it is a very severe and sometimes a very unreasonable standard by which we frequently try the quality of Christian work on heathen soil. We often seem to expect, even from the first generation of converts, and it may be these from the midst of savage tribes, a stability of character, a rectitude of morals, a decency of manners,

and an orderliness and intelligence of religious and even of social political behavior, which among ourselves are the slow fruits onl centuries. We expect too much, and we expect sometimes what o never to come. For in the wide progress of the Gospel, it is to hold, not only what is alike in all men, as their sin and need, what also will forever be unlike, as their temperaments, their ta and their ineradicable race feelings and ideas.

The ideals of the Christian life ought not to be expected to be same everywhere and among all peoples. How those ideals have va in the line of our own Christian history, and among peoples closer allied to us in race, and in civil and social institutions, than m to whom this Board carries the gospel to-day! The primitive disc of the commune at Jerusalem, the soldier disciple of the Roman leg the Gaulic missionary, the mediæval abbot, the belted crusader, sandaled palmer, the studious friar, the cloistered nun, the Reforma preacher, the New England pilgrim, the Christian man or matron of time, —all these are recognized as having been true disciples of Master; but in how different guise, and in how many points diverse

If, then, in the line of our own physical and spiritual ancestry recognize such variation within the bounds of unity, can we ex less in the future developments of Christianity among populations dissimilar as those with which the Gospel undertakes to deal? ought not to expect less. To anticipate that Christianity just a exists among us is to supersede all other forms or ideals of Christia always, is to narrow it and to narrow mankind.

The wonder of wonders is that the Christ who is humanity's H and the new Kingdom's King is comprehensive enough to be Lord brother of men so unlike. To the Occidental he is the occidental the Oriental he is the oriental Christ. The cultured Englishman fi nothing in him which is strange; the Bushman African, once brou near to him, finds him familiar no less. In both alike, and in all come to him, he awakens the experiences and the loyalties of the h enly citizenship. And this growing, multiplying, diversifying evide of the susceptibility of all men to spiritual life in Christ bears "witne to the fathers' "faith" that the Gospel is an ultimate revelation to n and a revelation for all mankind. They had no other view of it, nor we have; for in the religion of Christ we have a universal and f religion for man.

Again, the *efficiency in the extension of the Kingdom of God of Sp ual above all Secular Instrumentalities* is another witness borne by seventy-five years of mission history.

Some degree of coöperation of spiritual and secular instrumenta *or at least* some employment of secular by spiritual ones, seem

necessary to the very existence of mission work. It was by the commercially inspired sails of the brigantines *Harmony* and *Caravan* that the first missionaries of this Board were wafted to Calcutta, and every missionary who has followed them and every bill of exchange has gone through channels provided by commerce. A general law of divine Providence seems to require the union of the spiritual with the secular powers in any considerable missionary endeavor. There must be the spiritual motive and aim, and there must be the door-openings and the highway-buildings of secular enterprises. It was along the track of the great military roads of the Roman Empire and on the grain-freighted vessels of its commerce that the first missionaries of the Gospel went on their different work. It was, at least very largely, because at the period of the Reformation the Roman Catholic and not the Protestant powers held the sovereignty of the seas, and voyaged, and discovered, and came in contact with heathen lands, that Protestantism contrasts so unfavorably with the Catholicism of that day in missionary work, and even in missionary desire.

Nay, deeper than this, it becomes us not to forget that political catastrophe and change seems often one of the providentially coöperant agencies by which the Gospel gets its influence, especially over large masses of men. It was not Constantine's conversion alone, but Maxentius' defeat at the Milvian bridge which made Christian the Roman Empire. And similar experiences on a smaller scale, occurring on the change of a dynasty or the conversion of a savage chief, have been repeatedly witnessed in our own day, and will doubtless be increasingly witnessed in time to come. Let the "unspeakable Turk" be driven out of Europe and Asia Minor to the inland plains from whence he came; let the reigning family of Imperial China or Burma be really converted to the Christian faith; let the rulers of Japan embrace the Gospel of the Kingdom, and the world might see again, as in early and mediæval periods, an altered attitude in a day of whole peoples toward the religion of Christ. There is an ancillary and coöperant agency oftentimes to be discovered and hoped for between the world-powers and the powers of the spiritual realm.

Nevertheless the primacy of the spiritual element in all missionary effort remains unchallenged. The extension of civilization is not the extension of Christianity; the Kingdom of the world is not the Kingdom of God. The power for the recovery of man lies, not in the diffusion of intelligence or the rectification of manners, but the renewal of the heart. This is familiar truth, but how emphatically, and how instructively in reference to all missionary endeavor, does it speak forth in the report of the Maharatta Mission in 1854 concerning the five thousand scholars who had there been taught in common

schools: "We cannot point to a single case of conversion amo this number."

No, the reliance for missionary success must be, where it eve in the direct power of spiritual truth, energized by the divine from whom it came. And the Gospel makes provision for such su It makes it in the directness and tremendousness of its appeal individual soul, as a being possessed of interests no secular co can measure and of destinies no secular considerations have po determine. It seconds and enforces its appeal by putting into convert's hands, whatever the strange dialect he may speak, a Book for his spiritual guidance; a Book whose divineness is no more plainly seen than in its power to hold whoever takes it f counselor, loyal and steadfast, amid whatever great or little secul of life, to the claims of the spiritual world. And it makes pro for the propagation of the same spiritual work in others, by ch each rescued one with his brother's keeping, the impartation light which has enlightened him.

So that the ideal of the Gospel (whether on home or heathe is that every convert becomes a missionary, every church or m station a training-school for promulgators of salvation. The spr the Gospel is thus secured by the coöperation of those won t Gospel. As has been beautifully said by one who was once h a heathen: "The tree of heathenism falls at last under those whose helves are made from its own branches."

And this ideal of a pure, direct, single-eyed spiritual work dis even from the first, but emphasized with every advance of Chris on home or foreign soil is that to which we are called. We indeed to the aid of commerce. Let art and literature, if the become the handmaids of Christianity; let the chariot of salvat sped on its way by the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah, or l steam-engines of America and England, but let the bearer Gospel tidings ever remember that the simple, saving, ef message given him to proclaim is this: "He that believeth on th of God hath everlasting life."

This observation concerning the character of the saving m of Christianity suggests the further witness borne by our seven years' missionary experience to *the power and the necessity of a Gospel as the Gospel of missions.*

Christianity claims the allegiance of mankind. It is as a relig the whole human family that it alone justifies missionary enc But signal as are the successes of Christianity on some fields promulgation, nearly three quarters of our race are outside th aries of its influence, are most of them ignorant of its very

By the latest and most careful estimates, above ten hundred millions of mankind are thus the legitimate but yet unreached objects of what claims to be an intendedly universal religion. But who are these thousand millions who are to be sought after and gathered into the Gospel fold? Among them are individuals and classes, certainly, of great intellect and learning; some races marked by mental acuteness and subtlety, but most of them ignorant, degraded, darkened, and all of them strangers to the ideas and habits of mind made familiar to us by long contact with Christianity.

Obviously, if these multitudes are to be reached at all it must be by a Gospel of extreme simplicity. If any hope is ours to win these various and benighted millions to the Christian faith, then Christianity must be presented to them in a form suited to their capacities, level to their grasp, fitted to their wants. Then it must be the plain, necessary truths of salvation, and in general these alone, which the Gospel messenger must proclaim. Then it cannot be the refinements of scholastic divinity, or the points of difference which separate good men in the explanation of the Gospel scheme, which can profitably be ventilated on heathen soil.

The missionary enterprise long ago theoretically learned — though it has never ascertained exactly how practically to deal with the fact — that denominational differences among Christians are stumbling-blocks on pagan ground. It is learning now that doctrinal differences are stumbling-blocks no less. This is a truth, indeed, which the Holy Spirit apparently attempted to teach early. The new converts at Antioch were troubled and perplexed by the subtleties of Jerusalem divinity. All they knew of the Gospel came from Jerusalem; but Jerusalem had various voices. The one voice said this, and the other voice said that; but both coupled with their sayings: "Except a man do this, he cannot be saved." And it required nothing short of a council whereof the Holy Ghost was a member and himself nominated in the decree, to state afresh and in their simplicity the Gospel demands.

The painful fact is in many ways brought home to us that the points of speculative opposition on which schools of divinity among us separate, and on which churches and parties in the church divide, are simply obstructive when transferred to missionary soil. What they are among ourselves is not now the question, but what they are when carried to regions where strange peoples await in ignorance the rising on them of a little Gospel light, is not merely matter of conjecture. When it comes to be a troublesome question to Japanese inquirers: "What is the efficacious principle of the atonement?" or, "What the ict extent and basis of the predestinating decree?" or, "What the

method and fulness of Biblical inspiration?" or, when Sout Islanders, under the teaching of Bishop Pattison, find them perplexed about the precise character of Christ's bodily prese the Eucharist — till the noble Bishop, with all his sacramen training, rises to the apostolic height of such a simple presentat the Supper, aided by illustrations drawn from their own pagan fes as the poor heathen Christians can understand and respond to, - then it becomes us to remind ourselves for the sake of a world to perish, how simpler than the simplest of our theologies is the message of the Gospel and the plain condition of eternal life. fying as it may be for us to consider how large a part of our st here at home is spent on questions non-essential to salvation, w of ourselves or of others, imperative is it to consider it and to it, if the Gospel of Christ is ever to be effectually addressed souls of ignorant, feeble, toiling, heathen men, whether of f lands or of our own.

A Missionary Gospel is a simple Gospel. It has been from th The precise nature and results of Adamic connections, the onto distributions of the divine personalities, the reconciliation of re bility and decree, discussions of the provinces of resistible an sistible grace, provings or disprovings of final perseverance in ho explications of the relative efficiency of the divine and human in the conversion of a soul, have no place therein. It rang o in the simple declaration: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ an shalt be saved," and it has no other utterance to-day. Let it b one of the great general creeds of Christendom, enumerating its than fifty definite, abstract particulars concerning the inherent of the Triune Personality, declares: "This is the Catholic faith, faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without do shall perish everlastingly." It comforts us, nevertheless, to kno a great and accepted missionary of the Gospel has said: "I shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be And it is the divine witness to the efficiency of the Gospel pr in large measure, in the simplicity of its first promulgation t celebrate to-day. Whatever of power there has been in it, th been the hiding of its strength.

I call your attention to but one more witness to the father which speaks out of this seventy-five years of missionary histor

This is the witness of *a continually enlarging conception of Truth, and of the comprehensiveness* of the Kingdom of God.

The simplicity of the conditions of salvation, and of the entrance into the kingdom of heaven, have just been spok

the simplicity of these things should not blind us to the fact that the Gospel is the wisdom of God and that the kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of infinite knowledge and truth. The Gospel is not the "power of God" to the salvation of the soul from death only, but is the "wisdom of God" also to the satisfaction of all the proper demands of man's intellect and heart forever. And it is one signal testimony to the dignity and divineness of the missionary enterprise that it has done so much to enlarge the boundaries of our knowledge in things human and divine.

What the missionary enterprise has done for certain departments of human learning, like geography and philology, has been universally admitted by those who know most of those sciences. The names of such men as Livingstone and Coan and Smith and Williams stand as representative examples of men universally recognized as having widened the area of human knowledge, concerning the peoples and languages and dwelling-places of mankind.

Less conspicuous, perhaps, but not less real has been the contribution of missions to a higher knowledge than this. The work of missions has reacted upon the Church, vivifying many a conception of religious truth, and enlarging the view of the majesty of Christ's salvation and of his kingdom. We are most deeply, though not always very consciously, indebted to the influences and suggestions which come from missionary ground, for a very considerable part of the energy with which certain great and familiar facts of religious truth appeal to us to-day.

The Fatherhood of God: It is easy to deduce the doctrine from Holy Writ; it is easy to claim it for ourselves; it is easy to assert that it must belong to Gentile as well as to Jew, and to all men everywhere; but how comparatively narrow and dim and personal our conception of that Fatherhood must be, till, stretching ourselves in imagination and sympathy as far as we may over the wide reach of all the vast, multiform, well nigh infinite variety of physical, mental, moral, social, experimental diversity which differences men, and of which missionary effort for them assures us more than any knowledge beside, we learn to say in their behalf as realizingly as in our own: "Our Father which art in Heaven; equally near to every one of us"!

The Extent of Christ's Atonement: We argue its universality from the greatness of the sacrifice; we think it must be universal because no sin seems to be outside its saving power but does not the most *affecting* vision of its measureless reach of grace rise on us when, from *some mountain-top of world-survey* of the illimitable sea of human *uilt and the illimitable variety of its* woe, we behold also the cross of *rist, reaching its arms of suffering* and benediction over all, and

hear the voice saying, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"?

The absoluteness of Christ's connection with individual human destiny: We are told of it in that statement of old time, "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved"; it reaffirms itself in that representation of the Master where he depicts the gathering before him of "all nations"; it speaks out in his plain declaration that God hath "committed all judgment to the Son"; but we get our most vivid apprehension of the fact when, amid all the diversities of human nature and human experience besides, we see that not a soul of man on earth is ever really brought into contact with him but it recognizes him at once as its natural Sovereign and Lord, as its proffered Saviour and Friend, and as its adequate and certain Judge.

The comprehensiveness of the Kingdom of God: We read of its many gates — three on the north, three on the east, three on the south, and three on the west — and we think of the Jews and proselytes and the gathered of the Gentiles thronging through the open doors. But it is when we remember that China's slant-eyed millions, and Fiji's cannibal tribes, and Africa's jungle-haunting swarms, and Greenland's snow-burrowing inhabitants, are all capable of citizenship therein, with equal loyalty to the King and equal provision for every variety of spiritual want, that the comprehensiveness of Christ's Kingdom comes most home to us as a reality, and the universality of his relations to humanity becomes the grandest of truths.

The work of missions illuminates and enlarges for us the Truth. We are indebted to it for widening conceptions of the Gospel and the Kingdom of God. As in the Church of the apostolic days the ingrafting of the wild-olive of the Gentile alone saved the Church from a new legalism and bondage, so the missionary enterprise is the savior of Christianity to-day from narrowness and selfishness, if not from decay and death.

Brethren and friends, these it seems to me are some of the elements of the "witness" which the seventy-five years of this Board's missionary history has borne to the Founders' Faith. Plain it is in the retrospect that they saw the promises and believed in their fulfilment, though they knew themselves to be but strangers and pilgrims on the earth. It is in the light of that glorious, multiplying witness that we lift up our hearts in praise to-night.

But they "received not the promise." Better things than they ever attained were to arrive. They were to wait a making perfect at other *hands.* And they are waiting still. But other hands are taking up *burden.* Other faith is supplementing theirs. The signs are auspi

around us that the hope in which they died is not much longer to linger. On all the wings of time it hastens. The night is waning, the morning is near. Come, Lord Jesus, and quickly take Thine own. Use us and ours in Thy victorious service. Employ, we entreat thee, the Church of Thy yet living disciples to perfect the fathers' faith in the reception of the promises!

SPECIAL DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mis

AT ITS

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY,

BOSTON, MASS., OCTOBER 14, 1885.

BY

RICHARD S. STORRS, D.D., LL.D.

The Prospective Advance of Christian Missions, suggested by present lines of movement in Christendom.

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DISCOURSE.

THE missionary work carried on in the world under the lead the Divine Lord, in whatever is essential to its method, its inst or its contemplated scope, is set before us with immortal distinc the words of the Master, addressed to the apostles, and rec Acts I, viii: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Je and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost the earth."

The swift widening of the area of their duty before the apos impresses us as we ponder these words, and we recognize a to whom spaces or times offer no limit as he opens to his f majestic plans.

"In Jerusalem" is of course the primary centre for the a service: in the city revered by the Jewish world for sacred ries, set apart from others as having in it the House of God, fro the traces of an earlier splendor had not disappeared, though a ing power now occupied its palaces and had set up in it foreig ards, and from which influence incessantly went to the various whither the scattered children of Abraham had carried their la synagogue, and their Sabbath. Here, naturally, was first to claimed the solemn and the tender message with which the were henceforth charged. Jerusalem was not a city of comme the recent Alexandria; nor a centre of art, like that which lay, ent weakness but in the lustre of old renown, under the sha purple Hymettus; least of all was it a forum for imperial plans, mighty metropolis on the Tiber; but it was distinctively a city of a pulpit from which great oracles of truth had long been spo from which the commanding appeal of the gospel could be ci more rapidly than from any other point on earth. So the Spiri was there to descend in vivid energy upon the disciples; and th of all, they were to tell the immortal story of a divine power the purposes of a divine love in the supremacy and self-sac the Christ.

But then, further, "in all Judæa": throughout the district of Samaria, crossing the country from the Dead Sea and

the Mediterranean, and losing itself on the southern side amid sterile wastes. Probably, indeed, the "coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan," of which Matthew speaks, and the "all Judæa," which the chief priests described as including Galilee, are represented by the name, which in popular use was inexact and elastic. As the ministry of the Lord had been largely accomplished in Galilee, and thence had extended into the Peræa, as from Galilee had come his early disciples, it is natural to infer that he embraced these wider ranges when he spoke to the apostles, and that the whole territory over which he had led them came before them as the scene of their labors. It was not large, even if reaching to Syria on the north, and including the lands on the east of the Jordan. As matched against famous historical empires it was insignificant. Yet, as related to eleven missionaries, it was practically so large that to cover it with their preaching might easily seem to surpass their strength. The horizon widened rapidly around them with the words of the Master. The mountains of Moab, the crests of Lebanon, the table-lands of Gilead, and the shimmering outstretch of sunset-seas, inclosed spaces immensely larger than lay between the entwining ravines of Hinnom and the Kedron.

But then opens another expanse for their missionary effort, having strange and large suggestions in it. "And in Samaria," says the Master; and by this word he carried the view of those who heard him, not over other leagues of land and breadths of water, so much as over separations of race, diversities of character, religious oppositions. He lifted before them the illuminating thought, new in the world, that moral barriers are not to interpose for detention of the truth; that to all peoples physically accessible its message must be borne. To feel the fair impression of this we need to recall, not only the fierce and inveterate animosities by which Samaritans and Jews were divided, but the fact that these were the product of centuries, and had ethical as well as ethnic intensity. Set in the light of the Master's word, the familiar story of ancient provincial feud and hatred takes world-wide significance.

The story need not be recited in its particulars. It is enough to remember that from the time when Ahab builded at Samaria his temple to Baal, and when his brilliant Phœnician queen celebrated there her native worship with haughty zeal and a prodigal pomp, onward to the time when the sweeping assault of Eastern war put in effect another people, mongrel and heathen, into the seats of Ephraim and Manasseh, and thence still onward to the day of the Master, the moral separation *between the two sec*tions had been angry and profound. It came at *length to be a contest of temple* against temple, of reciprocally expul*ve and anathematizing rites,* as well as of the venomous prejudices of *e. Diversities of origin, custom,* religion, contributed to it. The

ndictive hate of fighting kinsmen united in it with the enmity of iens. It was, on either side, an inherited passion. At times it rose ı such intensity that "thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil," ecame to the Jew a compound denunciation, of equivalent parts; that ɔthing which a Samaritan had touched remained clean to the Jew; ıat he could not be received as a proselyte, or be admitted as a witness ı court, and was publicly cursed in the synagogue-service; that his land as only recognized by the Rabbis as "the land of the Cuthæans." he Samaritans, on the other hand, welcomed and protected renegade ews. They refused hospitality to those journeying to the feasts, ɔmetimes violently assailed them, and sold into slavery Jewish cap- ves. They were said to have penetrated the temple on Moriah, and to ıve defiled it by scattering the bones of the dead on its pavement. heir own temple at Shechem they had once publicly dedicated to ıpiter.

It is this historical condition of things which gives peculiar reach and ajesty to the Lord's parable of the Good Samaritan. It is this which plains, while it does not excuse, the fierce spirit of apostles when Samaritan village repulsed them on their way to Jerusalem. It is ıis which sets on a sombre background the surpassing beauty of that ɔnversation with a woman of Samaria in which the Master unfolded ı the world the nature of worship. And it is this, as I said, which ıve a sudden surprising enlargement to the area of their duty when ıe apostles took from his lips their great commission. "In Jerusalem ıd in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the ırth." The closing direction only consummates the preceding. If the stance of scores of miles from the city was to set no limit to the eaching of the gospel, neither could the distance of hundreds of agues. If the stubborn hatreds between Samaritans and Jews, with ıe fierce separating forces beneath, were not to detain the new evangel om being carried throughout the province which lay in jealous and ıllen hostility north of Judæa, then there was nothing in any such differ- ıces, of Greek or Roman or Gothic blood, of heathen descent, alien ıstoms, idolatrous rites, which should anywhere limit its proclamation. he perfect liberation of the new Faith from all the bonds which had ttered the old in its challenge to mankind is in that word, "in ıamaria." All differences among men, however fixed or elemental, are erleaped by the precept, and the religion of the Christ, in its spiritual anscendence, is declared the religion for all the world. The height to hich he arose in the Ascension is no more superlative than is the titude here occupied by the Master above contemporary teachers. *anifestly* he looked from supernal summits, not from any earthl: *vation* of Moriah or Olivet, upon the race to which he had cor

and throughout which it was his final command that his gospel be carried.

Under that charter the apostles went forth, and they who followed them, to bear his message of clemency and glory to Samaria, Galilee, to Asia, Macedonia, Italy, Spain, to the barbarous peoples of central and of northern Europe, to what had been the powerful empires along the Euphrates and the Nile. It is under that charter that we are assembled. The Church has never overtaken the rush of those imperative initiatory words. The rim of the globe, which is their only horizon, it has not reached.

This is the thought which strikes us first, as we ponder these words. But with it comes another, also of perpetual significance. It concerns the nature of the work to be done, throughout these widening and indeterminate spaces. "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me" — that is the brief synopsis of it; or, rather, that is its perfect description. To the accomplishment of this office, the consecrated life of each apostle must be directed. It is the same mission which the Church has to-day.

In one sense, of course, in the primary sense, the apostles were to be witnesses for the Master, as others who followed them could not be. They had been cognizant of all that was amazing and all that was inspiring in his earthly career, while attentive to his words, and sympathetically aware of his spirit. Of precept and miracle, of holy life and beneficent action, of prayer and fasting, stupendous promise and startling prediction, of compassion toward the poor, and festal sympathy with the joy of the bridal, they could testify from personal knowledge; and they had been witnesses, or some among them, to the marvels at the Baptism, to the wonder on the Mount, to the agony in the Garden, to the Trial and the Cross. They all had been witnesses to that Resurrection which had opened toward the skies the gates of the grave. They were to be witnesses to what even yet they cannot have expected: the illustrious theophany over Bethany, when, in the act of final benediction, the Lord was carried from their sight into heaven. To them were to appear the two men in white apparel, saying, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." They therefore were, in the strictest sense, to be witnesses for him, declaring to the world what they had seen of his majesty and grace, what they had felt of his divine nature, revealing itself through human accents, and under the forms of human action. Their office had essential relations to mankind, and its virtue can never be exhausted by age. By their testi*mony to the superlative facts, involving* celestial interventions, which *re at the base of the Christian Religion*, they were to lay the founda*ns of Christendom, to write their* names on its corner-stones, to

ve at once impulse and law to the Christian teaching of all ıbsequent time.

In this office they could, of course, have no successors, any more ıan a witness of the death of Cæsar, or the crowning of Charlemagne, the discovery of San Salvador by Columbus, could have successors the function of personal testimony. Even Paul could not become ı apostle till he had also seen the Lord. They who have since been :t apart to continue their office, with whatever forms of consecration, ıve been properly superintendents of churches, or of Christian com- unities. They have been, not unfrequently, rich in learning, fervent zeal, appropriate leaders and eminent teachers in ecclesiastical com- onwealths; but they have not been — it was inherently impossible that ıey should be — such witnesses to the Master as were the apostles.

But, in another sense, all disciples who have followed those apostles, ıd have given to their original testimony a wider proclamation, have :en witnesses with them. Independent of region, race, or sex, has :en this constant secondary ministry. Men and women have seen the ord, not manifest to the senses, but evident to the spirit, as declared / those who first beheld him, and have borne to him their joyful itness. They have seen him, as the disciples saw him at Antioch at Ephesus, predicted by prophets, foreshadowed in ancient rite and mbol, foreshown by sacrifice, portrayed by evangelists, and declared / attendant signs and wonders to be the Son of God with power. hey have seen him supplying the great argument of epistles, and ıve faced his glory, reflected as from a burnished mirror, from gleam- g pages of the Apocalypse. He has touched their hearts with instant rce through sacrament and sermon, or by subtler discovery in the ises of experience, solacing sorrow, succoring weakness, delivering om temptation, comforting by the grave; and then they have seen him anifest in the world, informing and moulding the growth of society, ıtting heavenly elements into human experience, sometimes apparent, most as in a personal revelation, in great revivals of faith and hope. illions of believers bearing such testimony to the kingship of Jesus ıve followed the apostles: and the vast succession never will cease ll the earth has seen the glory of Christ — till he himself has come gain, in power and pomp, according to the angels' word. The Holy host is still upon those who bear this witness; and the service of John of James is repeated wherever men, first led to the Lord by their ıstruction, and feeling in themselves the push of his impulse, are lling the world what they know of his glory.

This was at the beginning, and is to-day, that preaching of the gospel *which* belong power and promise. "Witnesses unto Me" — that is e essence of Christian teaching. The apostolic preaching had in it

testimony its vital element, the secret of its amazing power. They who went forth from beneath the Ascension were not specially commissioned to preach human sinfulness, though they saw that most clearly in the light of the Cross, and set it forth in words which burned as they flashed from their lips, or which almost scorched the papyrus, as in Paul's letters to Corinth and Rome. But men had known of this already. The conscience of evil, though enfeebled and muffled, was not dead in human souls. Philosophy recognized the fierceness of the force against which its precepts were ineffective. All costly rites of the heathen cultus had the sense of it for their basis. The world knew its wickedness, and was restless to the centre because of the knowledge. It was not to admonish men of death that the apostles crossed seas and lands, and invaded strange cities. Each man was assured of that event; and to make a new proclamation of it was as needless as to teach that fire will burn, or the venom of serpents infuse numbness and pain. It was not even an announcement of Judgment which the apostles were sent to make, though the vast and dread panorama of that had been unveiled, as never before, in the Lord's discourse on the Mount of Olives. But Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan, Roman, had had already premonition of that; and in legend, poem, and popular thought, as well as in terrible hieroglyphics painted on walls or cut into rock, the retribution to come, with the fatal assize leading to it, had been depicted. The spiritual test, the immortal consequences, the person of the Judge, it did remain for apostles to show; but a fearful looking-for of inquisition and recompense, after the grave, was familiar to human hearts.

Nor was it the doctrine of a divine Providence in history which gave the virtue to apostolic instruction. That was involved in the Hebrew development. Lawgiver and prophet, psalmist and historian, had set it forth. Even the higher ethnic philosophy had had occasional glimpses of it. It was only kept from becoming a commanding thought to the world by those fantastic misconceptions of God to which lust and fancy had given birth. All that was needed to enlighten the world as to the divine order in history was a reawakening of the sense of God's majesty, carrying with it a fresh impression of the supremacy of that plan which he had already in part accomplished, and which he had sketched in fuller outline before singer and seer. Paul and Peter of course recognized this plan, in fulfilment of which their Master had come; while to John it was sublimely manifest, in victorious courses and august consummations. But it was not the transfiguring element *in the message which apostles bore to* mankind.

Nor was even the superlative doctrine of the Trinity in the divine *ıture such an element.* The conviction of this was distributed by

their message. It was, in fact, the indispensable ground to the validity and authority of that message; and wheresoever that was carried this doctrine went, in its germinal form. It gave higher thoughts of the Divine Glory. It suggested the splendor of the vision of saints in worlds above. But even this transcendent mystery was not the gospel; and however it is implied in benediction and doxology, in the formula of baptism, and in the supreme self-consciousness of the Lord, the apostles leave it to be evolved into dogmatic form out of their ample practical instructions, and under the guidance of the Spirit of him to whom they bear their personal witness.

It was that witness which they were sent to present to the world, wherever, by utmost diligence and patience, they could reach its inhabitants. Their unparalleled office had in this charge its motive and meaning, and its burden of glory. They carried more than verbal promises. Their words bore assurances intrinsically surpassing any high intimations of pardon and peace imparted subjectively to aspiring spirits. They testified to mankind, from their personal knowledge, of One on the earth whose coming had made the epoch in history; whose presence had linked the earth with the heavens, and opened to men immortal hope. They were not to embellish with any additions the career they had witnessed, but to set forth the Lord as they had seen him: in his transcendent nature, divine and human; in his transcendent character, sympathetic and holy; friend of the poor, while heralded by angels; powerful without pride, and suffering without sin; tender toward the child, while supreme before the proud, and undaunted before the popular rage; dying amid mysterious darkness, yet ascending to heaven in a brightness celestial. His rule it was their errand to rehearse, as the law for the world; his spirit to present, as the sovereign ideal for human aspiration. And in his stupendous and unsearchable offices they were to set him on high before men — offering reconciliation with God, on the condition of penitent faith; proposing renovation of heart and life, by the inward operation of a divine grace; summoning to unequaled conquests, of the world and of self, yet supplying strength for successful struggle, and rewarding it with a joy in communion with himself which the heart of man had not conceived; abolishing death, by giving triumphant tranquillity in it, and opening to faith immeasurable reaches of leisure and power beyond the grave, of work and worship, insight and purity, the society of saints, the vision of God! So was the Christ to be declared by the apostles, whether the world would hear or forbear. So was he presented, through their consenting attestations: wearing the crown of crushing pains, but replacing it with the crown of immaculate supremacy; supplying the condition, as far as possible offering

measure, of the spiritual life reserved for his disciples, by the anguish unsearchable to which he had stooped to gain it for them; at last illustrating his majesty and his love in the gift of the Spirit, sent amid phenomena of mighty breath and hurtless fire from the heaven which he represented.

It was by this manifestation of Christ — not by argument, not by ethics, not by impassioned melodious discourse — that the apostles wrought effects, benignly revolutionary, which marked a new era in human experience. In the acceptance of this personal Lord, the gospel found its first fruit in the heart. In love to him its essential moral effect was accomplished. In an adoring enthusiasm for him was the force before which flames were quenched, and fetters became as silken garlands. In the joy of the blessed greeting by him was to be on high the celestial consummation. Therefore his own word always had been to those whom he addressed: "Come unto Me." Therefore the office of his ministers was defined in the terms of the text; and by the "foolishness" of this preaching of him, without assistance of worldly wisdom, the race itself was in the end to be morally refashioned. So far as men were brought into fellowship with him, their life would be lifted to the divine levels. When he should be accepted as Lover and Lord by all human hearts, Paradise would be built anew, in vaster extent, in lovelier beauty, upon the planet which sin had cursed, but on which a strange sacredness had been shed by the drops of his blood. "Testify unto Me" was, therefore, his mandate to those whom he sent; and in the impulse, and under the limits, of that commission, they went to bear their living witness, with those who followed them, from Babylon to Spain, from the Libyan sands to the North Sea and to Britain. They left the world with a Christ supreme before the thoughts and hearts of men, to whom prophets and seers had long looked forward, but of whom history would have kept no account, sufficient and clear, except for their undying witness.

It is under the same essential commission that we are assembled: with the purpose in our hearts to fulfil in our time, to the measure of our strength, in the field which is the world, the precept and the prediction which lie in the text; to set him forth of whom we are taught by those who saw him in his agony and his victory, and whose touch upon our souls we have personally felt. In this aim each effort has for us its mighty motive. Because of this, celestial gleams are on our work.

*It is natura*l to ask, then, as we gather to-night, what promise, if any, *of the progress of the work in years* to come is presented by the *hanges appearing in the world since* the century began, through three *rths of which this institution has* existed? We may not now ask the

Master, any more than might his early disciples: "Lord, wilt th this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" If we do, we surely hear him saying, "It is not for you to know the times o seasons which the Father hath set in his own authority." But we cautiously yet confidently infer what is likely to be from what al has occurred; and, looking back over this cycle of years, it m least be encouraging to our hope to note the forces which are evid conspiring to serve and further the Master's plan; to see how work initiated by him, while the parting cloud was waiting to re him, shows distinct promise of rapid advance toward magnif consummation.

There are two general lines of thought under which the indica proper to be considered may be rapidly grouped.

First—It is strictly within bounds to say that the personal Chri his Divine sonship, his work of redemption, and his unique leadersh mankind, has now, and is to have henceforth, an increasing preëmin before the thought of the peoples of the world; that the gospel is distinctly seen to have in his person its incomparable power; and the impression is widening always of his just supremacy on e The change in this direction since the century began mus regarded as permanent and prophetic.

It is a fact full of suggestion that infidelity itself, incessant resolute as its efforts have been against the Master of Christendom not only failed to push him from his place in the homage of man but has shown, by the failure of successive attempts on different l how vain in their nature such efforts are. It is not possible, withi limits of this discourse, to illustrate this point. I must pass it w bare reference to the fact. But those who have followed with ca observation the changing courses of sceptical speculation in the fifty years, must have seen how complete has been its failure to e lish any affirmative theory of the origin of Christianity in na sources, or to explain the personality of the Lord, with his astonis command in the world, while reckoning with him as a Jewish pe possessing a genius for religion. Each fresh effort in this directio encountered difficulties too great to be surmounted: till the l treatment of the august story at the hands of unbelief has to look lessly back toward that vulgar hypothesis of distinct imposture, b Lord or his disciples, which no magic of literary art can raise from tomb to which it was consigned a century since, amid a general a justified scorn. Nothing is more evident, in the history of opi *than* that the question of the perplexed governor: "What shall *then unto* Jesus, which is called Christ?" has still to be an *by unbelief.* With incessant force it surges to the front. A

answer be not, "Worship him as divine Lord of heart and life," it must be, in effect: "Treat him as one who led his disciples into a maze of astounding mistakes, and on whom the world's best thought and hope have ever since been foolishly fixed." There is no ridge, for final pause, on the slippery slope toward this conclusion. Yet concerning this answer the judgment of mankind can not be tardy, and will not be vague.

But while unbelief has restlessly struggled, in devious ways, with oscillating effort and vain repetition, to lead the world to distrust its Master, and while some who feel his singular majesty are still unready to accept the incarnation of Deity in him, and can only regard him as a transcendent mystery, the number of those before whom he stands in glorious power, in a more amazing glory of love, the divine Redeemer and King of the world, was never so great as at this hour; the allegiance to him of human spirits was never so wide, and never more fervent. In spite of the hastes and hot ambitions of which our times seem full beyond parallel; in spite of that abject moral inertness which merely mutters, "I do not know," before the greatest spiritual facts; in spite of the impatience of generous minds with imperfect institutions, to which the divinest cause must be sometimes committed; in spite of any involuntary doubts awakened in minds which wish to believe by the stupendous story of the Christ, — his proper supremacy over mankind, and his unique office as the renovator of life, are more clearly discerned with every year among Christian nations; and the function of witnessing for him to the world inspires to-day, in a measure unequaled, the enthusiasm of the peoples to whom he has given culture and power. This seems to me as certain as are stars in their courses.

The extent to which the thought of the time fastens upon him is indicated by the volumes, crowding each other, which seek to put into modern forms the story of his life. They constitute a significant part of modern literature; often as minute and elaborate in treatment as they are affectionate and reverent in tone; with as fine genius exhibited in them as in any contemporary imaginative works, with as firm and delicate a power of portraiture as in any biography, as rich in learning as in the amplest historical treatise. And in each of these works which retains any hold on the affirmative judgment of men the splendor of divinity appears within and shining around the winning and the mighty figure which it presents. No creed or confession bears clearer witness to the divine indwelling in the human in the person of the Christ than do such lives, written in the interest of knowledge and faith, not of polemics, and aiming simply to frame anew the antique story. The writers of them intuitively recognize his mysterious supremacy, his essential separateness from the noblest of the

world, his innate relations to higher spheres. Not with artistic purpose, but in the spontaneity of minds apprehending the secret of the Gospels, they set a glory more radiant and complete than any on the canvas around his head. And in this they indicate, while also they educate, a conviction which grows, against all opposition, wherever the Scriptures are in men's hands.

The quickened study of the Old Testament scriptures has had its bearing on this result. A sceptical temper may have sometimes incited this, but its effect has not been in the sceptical direction. Whatever lines of continuity or of cleavage men think they detect in Old Testament writings, it cannot be denied that sunken deeply into their substance is the prediction of One to come, Son of David and Son of Man, the Ruler in Israel, the Anointed One, whose goings forth have been from everlasting. And not even the caprice of a hostile imagination can select any other than Jesus of Nazareth as the one to whom such promises pointed. Either the long expectation was vain, and what appeared to psalmist and seer divine intimations were mistaken suggestions of human wishes, or this is he whom they from afar eagerly greeted. The recent remarkable movement of Israelites, in Russia and elsewhere, toward the acceptance of Jesus as the Christ, illustrates a tendency which must everywhere appear as Hebrew history and the Hebrew economy are sympathetically studied. The writer of the most elaborate of recent works on "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah" — himself, like Saul of Tarsus, by all his inheritance a Hebrew of the Hebrews — describes the new Testament as presenting "the fulfilment of all prophecy"; and whatever incites to profounder study of the manifold predictions imbedded in institutions, incorporate in symbols, as well as articulated in triumphing words, will infallibly lead men, through illuminated pathways, to the Manger and the Mount. In the Bible, as in the earth, the very pick and dynamite with which men attack the ancient strata only serve to uncover hidden seams of riches and power.

While the elder Scriptures, as thus searchingly studied, lead up to the Christ, it is more and more clear, too, that the Gospels are to be accepted by the world, however full of astonishing wonders, as written soon after the events which they describe, and as at least intentionally faithful both in record and in portrait. The four unquestioned epistles of St. Paul show beyond cavil that when they were written that account of the Master which appears in the Synoptists was already familiar; while the fresh discussions of the Gospel of John, and of early patristic testimonies to it, push it very far back from the date to which it was *hastily* assigned by sceptical scholars a half-century since. The critical *inquiries* of the last sixty years, the newly discovered manuscripts

available to students, the larger mastery of the writings of those who followed the apostles, the fresh apprehension of the subtile harmonies which pervade the New Testament, have all conspired to vindicate the historical value of the records of our religion; while the last and loftiest of these records, surviving prolonged and fierce assaults, has come from the contest, not stained or scarred, but with unblemished serenity of grace. The glory of him who had been declared in clearest completeness to the spiritual sense of the beloved disciple suffuses it with a lustre as bright as we can bear till we are called to go up higher; while the Lord who sublimely appears to us through it is not the Lord of a mystical fancy, or of any evanescent poetic dream, but a being as life-like as Socrates or Cæsar, though divine enough to have bended the heavens. The Gospel of John, it is safe to say, has a place in the world, as well as in the grateful affection of Christians, which no succeeding attacks will disturb.

It is interesting to note, too, how not only this Gospel, but the entire series of Scriptures which it harmonizes and crowns, have taken in our day a fresh distinctness to English readers through that revision of the previous translation to which vast labor and wealth of learning have been devoted; and how geographical and historical researches have set the Lord anew before the world, in the ways which he traversed, in the customs of life by which he was surrounded. He is manifested to us through a glass of translation transparently clear; while the scenes of his discourses, and the scenes of his miracles, have become as evident as are cities or seas on which we look. The Oriental life of his time is restored; and a picture of him, in the setting of his career, is popularly familiar, which scholars themselves could not have commanded when this institution began its work. No other person in history is known with such accuracy of detail, in such ample completeness, in all his environment. We see him in his contacts with Jewish traditionalism, and his undisturbed separateness from it. We see him before priests, sceptics, soldiers, the peasant and the governor, in the synagogue and the cottage, in retirement, on the street: and in all situations he consistently appears, as of old to apostles, mysterious, yet distinctly individual; ardently sympathetic, strangely solitary; the man of sorrows, though the worker of wonders; who did not share the penitence he demanded; who claimed to have legions of angels for his ministers, yet who comforted the sad, and companied with the poor; who had not where to lay his head, yet who called the weary to find in him immortal rest; who was robed in the glory of transfiguration, yet *who wept tears like drops of* blood; who patiently endured the death *f the cross, yet who rose from* the dead, amid portents that startled *e Roman guard, leaving the* napkin that had been about his head

wrapped together in a place by itself. Tender as a woman, fine fibre beyond poetic example, yet the ruler of nature, the lord heavenly principalities, the tranquil conqueror of the spirits of me he rises to new vividness through whatever illustrates the Scripture and we are the better prepared to meet him in his continuing se revelation, through the present phenomena of character, and in th entangled complex of life with which he entwines celestial threads.

It is not literature, even that which is sacred by its relation to hir which expresses him with most immediate force to hearts that see a Divine helper. He meets such in their day-by-day walk, through tl lives which he ennobles; in the spirits to which he gives, as aforetim supremest impulse. The testimony of human experience to him h not only been gaining incessant force in modern time — it has reache in effect, a demonstrative value. Millions of persons, certainly n outranked in intelligence, or in moral self-poise, by men of the worl have shown his power of present inspiration. Myriads of souls ha been conscious of effects which cannot be explained except as h energy is recognized in them. The martyrs of China and Madagasca the conquering sufferers under barbarous tortures, or amid the fat severities of climate, have borne to him a witness as signal as th of those who died for him under Nero or Decius. The martyr-age h risen again, to confront our century of mechanisms and commerce, a to glorify before it the victories of the Spirit, with him to whom tho victories point; while they who have found strange succors in wea ness, which they could attribute only to him, a strange illumination hours of doubt, inspiring impulse to vast generosities, or a surpassir supremacy in death, have been multiplied beyond count. To o contemplating these facts of the spirit, the glory of the Mast appears in them as in a nineteenth-century Gospel. In comparisc with the evidence thus furnished of him deductions of science wa firmer ground, or a closer connection of conclusion with premise. Th outward and inward swing of Uranus in its motion through th heavens no more clearly implies the centrality of the sun, with th contrary pull of an outlying planet, than do these swells and subs dences of feeling in Christian hearts imply the presence of such Lord as the Gospels exhibit, overcoming the attraction of earth fascinations.

In the highest departments of public action, and in the lofti realms of thought, his influence is as evident. In history he is co spicuously seen, presiding over combinations of events with a rule th more impressive because it is silent. Whatever moves in the line his precepts, however feeble at the beginning, is found in the long r assured of success. Whatever opposes his word and will, tho

enthroned in authority, served by armies, goes to the dust before forces fatal although unseen. Gibbon and Hume, while hostile toward him, bear to him unwitting witness, since the kingship which they denied is the only key to the baffling intricacies of human affairs which they labored to picture. He comes before us in the age which followed his Ascension, through the endurance of humble men and patient women, sustained and uplifted before dungeon and stake by faith in his person, and not by a stubborn adherence to doctrine. He comes to discovery in the conquest of the Empire, against which his power seemed lighter than a lance-head, but whose ancient, fierce, and haughty strength had to give way before the new life which he launched upon it. In mediæval history we meet him still, walking amid darkness and on the turbulence of social commotions, almost as of old on stormy waves; and in men like Bernard, Anselm, Aquinas we see his grace, and the sovereign might of his delicate touch. In the Reformation his impulse is apparent; and no explanation of that is sufficient, with the long preparation, the sudden outbreak, the faith which was maintained against seductions and fierce oppositions, the fresh start given to the life of the world, which does not find the power of the Master in its vast evolution. In the English development he meets us again, subordinating the grossness or fierceness of people or of kings, amalgamating tribes, turning the shadows of ages into morning, making liberties keep an even step with his unfettered word. In the settlement of this country, and the subsequent development of the nation here planted, we see a wisdom surpassing man's, and are sensible of plans which contemplate enduring and cosmical welfares. In a word, it may fairly be said that all the greater phenomena in history, since he ascended, are such as they must have been beneath an energy like his, confronting and conquering alien forces. To take him out of gospel and epistle, impossible as that is, it were almost easier than to take him out of that recorded progress of mankind which has in him its reason and its rhythm. Mechanical theories are palpably inadequate to account for the princely characters in history, or to interpret its illustrious epochs. A mystical element has to be recognized in its unexpected drifts and convolutions. And the personal will of him whose spirit is steadily advancing, against manifold resistance, to the conquest of the earth, gives of this element the only immediate and sufficient account.

So secular ethics have to acknowledge him as their Master, and to find in his law of piety and of charity their life and their limit. The relation of self-regardless virtue to the highest self-interest was never *so illuminated as through his promise* that whoso will lose his life for *is sake shall essentially save it*; while from his superlative spiritual *tives morality derives a clearer light* and a keen inspiration.

Philosophy gains enlargement in him, has new conceptions of tl nature of man as it sees that nature manifested by him in ideal cor pleteness, and has a pre-vision, impossible before, of exalted life ar unmeasured achievement for human spirits beyond the grave. Christia philosophy is not a pretence, or an illusory dream. The final appr hension of the grandeur of the soul has come through him who taugl no scheme of metaphysics, but whose whole career illuminated tl problems which philosophy seeks to solve. The psychology of tl New Testament instructs the most sensitive and discursive of thinker while it faces materialism, in its protean forms, with a front of angel height and brightness. It is true still, as was said long ago, that "tl secret of Man is in the Messiah."

Governments themselves feel the pressure of his influence, and i inward development, as in outward relations, find strength and tra quillity in conformity with his rules. Colliding with his plans for tl furtherance of righteousness, and of the moral freedom and pea which righteousness fosters, they are weak with whatever armamen of power. According with his method, they have guaranties of conti uance unknown to the old world; while the finer tone and the widenir range of the voluntary rules of justice and comity which now inte weave peoples are a nobler tribute to his moral supremacy than any treatises or cathedrals. Even barbarous tribes see the blessing of h leadership, and desire the results which follow in its train. For secul welfare, if not yet for spiritual gifts, he is more and more widely tl Desire of Nations; and those who have been trained under influenc indifferent or fiercely hostile to him and his cause crave the arts ar mechanisms, the liberties and humanities, which are evidently cogna to his religion, and are limited to its realms. Beyond precedent tl world now acknowledges that the welfare of states is in the keeping him who wore on earth no crown but of thorns, and whose claim kingship seemed to Roman and Jew the most fantastic of human dream

I hardly need remind you, in the same line of thought, how Christ centric the theology of Christendom has steadily become; with wh ever-increasing clearness the system of truth presented in pulpits or the schools finds its centre of unity and its secret of power in the Inca nation and the Cross; how the conceptions of the person of Christ, ar of his supreme work, represented in current formulas of doctrine, supp and measure their spiritual value. The radical evil in human nature taught as related to the soul's need of him in whom alone is its resc and hope. The spiritual life promised to believers is shown as begi ning in faith toward him, as having prophetic consummation in the lo which finds in its consciousness of him the prediction of glory, as attai*ing its supernal* completeness in his heavenly welcome. The divine

poses take attractiveness to the heart, as having contemplated aforetime his coming, and as now contemplating his supremacy in the earth, while assuring the acceptance by personal souls of him as Redeemer. Inspiration has its charm for the spiritual mind in the pledge which it gives of divine veracity to the prophecies and records which testify of him. Invisible spheres are illumined to thought by his Resurrection. The Judgment to come takes more awful significance from the tender eyes which are to be then to the workers of wickedness flames of fire. And whatever of history, biography, precept, whatever of parable, prophecy, song, offer particular themes of thought as men ponder the Scriptures, are shown as suffused with the lustre of Christ, or as set around his incomparable person, accessories of its glory.

I do not mean, of course, that this had not in a measure been done in other times, by other teachers. Great names and memories would rebuke me if I did. It is indeed the earliest faith of the Church which is here reappearing — the primitive doctrine of confessors and martyrs, and of the missionaries who evangelized Europe. But it is a reappearance. The faithful preaching of a century since dwelt more emphatically on the sovereignty of God; on the relation of means of grace to human conversion; on the divine plan of redemption; on the agreement of the purposes of election with human freedom. It is not due chiefly to one man or another that the change has occurred, but to a steady impulse and drift in Protestant Christendom. A certain inexhaustible and invincible virtue in the story of the Lord, and of his divine work, has been forcing this story upward and frontward, even while the attacks of successive sceptics have been fiercest against it; and human hearts, reaching upward toward God, have found no force equivalent to it, while certainly none successful against it. The fact is significant, and has auguries in it.

It is only in natural accordance with this that the poetry of the Church now celebrates Christ with its most eager homage, and that the hymns which give voice to this homage are welcomed and multiplied; while art, though shrinking more than of old from attempts to portray him, and feeling with Thorwaldsen that any seeming success could only demonstrate the decline of its genius, takes impulse from him, aspires to serve his kingly cause, and feels itself then alone worthy of honor when it reflects the moral beauty which he impersonates. Churches are found to multiply their strength precisely as they bear witness to him. Accomplishments of learning, grace of discourse, the *eloquence which* celebrates civic anniversaries, or which elaborates *ethical themes, — these are well in* their way, but they do not hold the *hearts of congregations, or build* such into grander vigor, as does the *ory of Bethlehem and of Calvary.* Societies denying or practically

ignoring his unique nature and superlative work, though they starte with the purpose of bringing him closer to human consciousness, an though often retaining great ethical earnestness, with a large and ric variety of culture, are apt to fall to pieces with the death of individual with the coming of fresh questions to the front, and of new soci interests. They lack, constitutionally, the self-propagating energ which springs up widely in affiliated societies, as drooping branches the banyan strike into the soil and rearise, till a forest appears whe was a stem.

On the other hand, the communions which testify of the Lord, as h showed himself to John or to Paul, not only grow in numbers an strength, but become more full of victorious hope, with every chang which reshapes society, even with every stroke of attack. That on among them all, whichever it may be, which most exultingly magnifie him, and reveals to the world his quickening power, is surest of aboun ing growth. Ritualism has what prominence it has through its effo to make the Lord apparent, by picture and vestment, by the crucifix an the candle; through the endeavor to link his life in elaborate servic with each season of the year, to exalt before the world the saints wh have followed, who now are with him, and to impart his spiritual energ on the instrument of the sacrament; through the effort, too, ofte eager and heroic, to do his work, in modern times, among the poor an obscure. The organization which ruled Christendom for ages has i surviving vigor and promise only here: not in the craft of prelates, th dialectics of advocates, or the zeal of the Jesuit, but in its professe exhibition of the Master; in the faith of devotees, and their cons crated lives; in that frank opening of the Gospels to the laity no commended by its councils; and in the vast ancient establishmen opulent and splendid, which it declares the Lord's palace among me

He is equally the centre of unity and vitality to Protestant comm nions; and their essential sympathy with each other, amid all the varieties, becomes always closer as to each he appears, as of old t apostles, the Lord of Glory. The missionary spirit, stimulated b faith in him as the King, becomes the gauge and the guaranty of pro perity to them. Instead of imposing burdens upon them, as to men the world it seemed certain to do, it proves the means of reinforcin their life, and filling them with unwasting energy. Decadence begi with its decline. When it rises to the point of utter enthusiasm, stir ulating sublime and self-sacrificing endeavor, the very frame of th Church becomes instinct with a power kindred to that with which th Lord ennobled and blessed the souls which sought him. The illumina ing light which then is in it, and the conquering energy, can only *described* as descending from God.

I have overstated nothing in this rapid survey; and it must be admitted by sceptics themselves that this clearer and more commanding appearance of the Lord of the New Testament to the mind of Christendom, after periods of prolonged darkness and contest, amid the emergence of such interests, researches, and bold aspirations as fill our times, is a fact replete with extraordinary suggestions. It seems a marvel, hardly less amazing than any reported in evangelical story. It prophesies, with almost articulate voice, the yet more vivid exhibition of him in time to come. Unbelief will continue to fight against him, perhaps with a vehemence only intensified as its hopelessness appears. But its very attacks upon the Christ are a compulsory tribute to his preeminence; and even infidelity, when serious and thoughtful, must admit, one would think, the moral splendor manifest in him, the astonishing testimonies which history gives to his vitalizing power, the amazing supremacy which he still holds over countries and centuries.

He is at this hour the paramount Person in the thought of the world. I do not forget Confucius or Buddha, but their regency is not for advancing nations. Ask any one, in lands of the modern life, unless he be a petulant sceptic, for the noblest name of the ancient world, and the answer is inevitable, "Jesus Christ." Ask who now touches the spirits of men with finest and with grandest power, and the answer is, with emphasis, the same. Human heroes disappear from the world, leaving the memory and the influence of great action, but he continues a Presence; the immortal Leader, whom nothing defeats; the one Benefactor, whose beneficent energy no achievements exhaust; the sovereign Teacher, in whom shine lustres from worlds above thought. Admiration toward others naturally becomes worship toward him. The Gospels themselves, which testify of him, take from his unique personality their supreme vindication, their perpetual crown; and in preaching of him we properly feel ourselves, not disciples of a doctrine, or disputants for a religious scheme, but the announcing heralds of a King. If he is still to be exalted in the century to come as he has been in this now drawing to a close, it seems scarcely extravagant to think that before the age closes the heavens may be luminous again with his presence, as they were of old with his ascension; that, not Olivet only, but every mountain, and all the earth, will reflect the effulgence of his descending person and throne! Certainly, his majestic preëminence before the mind of mankind, contrasting the humbleness of mien and of circumstance in which he first appeared on earth, and breaking into *increasing splendor through* a century crowded as this has been with *distinguished characters, illustrious* achievements, great events, should *give an impulse to our spirits in* witnessing for him such — we may *not be* surpassed until we see him in open vision!

And so we reach the Second line of thought bearing on the futu advance of this work toward its grand consummation. It is altogeth within the limits of a just moderation to say that the prodigious secul progress realized in the world in the last hundred years has giv opportunities wholly unparalleled for the universal exhibition of t Christ, in the glory and grace which become continually more evide in him.

I do not here refer to the new and unexpected local opportuniti for the preaching of the gospel, numerous as these are, so much as the general movement of governments and peoples, the trend of whi sets in this direction; the progress of which, morally interpreted, h definite relation to this result.

We meet at once the significant fact that Christendom is far mo powerful than it was a century since, in interior development, and related to outside peoples. A peculiar impulse and uplift ha certainly appeared in it, whether or not we recognize beneath the celestial forces. An illustration of the change, perhaps as striki as any, is that presented by Christian Europe, in contrast with t Ottoman Empire which has lain so long adjacent to it, and which w for centuries so powerful against it.

This has had a religion higher in tone than the polytheistic, and ali with fierce missionary enterprise. It has had enormous resources power. It had a standing army before the first in Western Europe. I characteristic motto has been that of Selim I: "Dominion is a bric to be won by him whose lip blenches not at the kiss of the sabre Beyond modern example it has concentrated power in single hands, a has given to its government the vigor of autocracy. Its martial ard has seemed at times almost preternatural in its terrible intensity. Y the story of its rapid modern decadence is written large in the worl annals.

Hardly more than three centuries ago — when the Spaniards we settling at St. Augustine, a little before the English Drake left his nar on the bay of San Francisco — the European Ottoman dominion cover more than had the preceding Byzantine Empire. From Belgrade Thessalonica, and southward to the Morea, stretched its expanse, fr the Black Sea to the Adriatic. Planted on the fairest part of t continent, on a territory rich in all elements of wealth, abundant population, and splendid with an ancient fame, this barbaric Easte power, which had broken out of Asia like a desolating whirlwind brutal life, frightened and almost paralyzed Europe, whose wis statesmen counseled against it with cautious timidity or sec *sought* its scornful assistance, whose most powerful armies *from* encounter with the trained and desperate fury of its hos

Sultan styled himself, "Lord of the Age." He claimed the exclusive title of Emperor. He did not make treaties with Christian Powers, but granted them peace under conditions. It seemed not improbable that the armies which had swept across the straits into Europe, and with frightful velocity had beaten resistance out of their path, would push still deeper into the continent, seizing and holding its central domain. It is hardly more than two hundred years since they were swarming in terrific array around the walls of Vienna, till the beleaguered and terrified city was relieved by Sobieski. It is hardly more than one hundred years since the Crimea passed from their grasp to be incorporated with Russia. It is not yet a hundred years since the Emperor of Austria undertook, with an army of two hundred thousand men, with the promised coöperation of a powerful Russian force and fleet, to conquer and annex certain Ottoman provinces, and was forced to retire with the loss of seventy thousand men by battle and disease. In the following year Turkey in return opened an offensive campaign against Austria, only checked by the death of the Sultan; and two years later, by common consent, the boundary of half a century earlier was reëstablished between the empires. It is still less than a hundred years since Ismail was taken by the tremendous rush of Suwarrow over wall and bastion, and the Turkish boundary, by the subsequent treaty of Jassy, was retired to the Dniester.

Since that you know how incessant, immense, has been the change in this malign and haughty power; how constantly it has reeled and receded; till Greece is now an independent kingdom, to which Albania has been recently added; Servia is equally independent, having possessed for sixty years a practical autonomy; Bosnia and Herzegovina are occupied and administered by Austria; Bulgaria is a tributary principality, with a Christian government, a national Assembly, and a national militia, a prince elected by the people, though confirmed by the Sultan, and a distinct Council of Ministers; Eastern Roumelia is substantially as free, with irrepressible tendencies toward union with Bulgaria; while Roumania, embracing Wallachia and Moldavia, is an independent kingdom, and Montenegro a peculiar patriarchal state. Of all the wide and wealthy territory which the Ottoman power once held in Europe, less than two sevenths remain in its control; while Christian populations and Christian institutions have rights and protection in even this remnant of territory which Bajazet or Solyman would have scorned to consider.

Of the weakening of the same power in Egypt, Asia Minor, Northern *Africa, I need not speak.* What we have to notice is the fact that, *hough the Turks continue in* a measure "encamped in Europe," *e occupation is only military,* and the camp is in constant and lively

retreat. "Turkey in Europe" is now a mere diplomatic adjustme which continues because foreign cabinets, fearing Russian aggrand ment, and determined to keep Constantinople from the Czar, in: on maintaining it. The day cannot be distant when the savage fo which captured Constantinople, stormed Belgrade, and occupied Bu which changed St. Sophia into a mosque, with a bloody hand imprin on its pillars, and which faced Christianity wherever it met it with scimetar's edge, will have vanished finally from the shores of Bosphorus. A power against which sabres are vain and intrig inadequate will have crowded it out of Europe. The prayers wh used to be offered against it in European churches, the Te Deu which were sung in chapel and cathedral when its advance was oc sionally checked, will have found their answer in the perman supremacy of the religion which it has hated throughout the domini which it has oppressed.

This is a distinguished example of what is now going on in the wo giving to Christendom and its organizing faith such preëminence earth as none could have thought so near at hand when this institut began its work.

It is a fact equally obvious, and not less significant, that wit Christendom the Protestant countries, in which the Scriptures familiarly read, and in which the spiritual influence of the Lord been free and inspiring, have come to a leadership which they by means equally possessed a hundred years since. In themselves tl have gained, beyond proportion, and in their moral and political h upon other lands. So, again, the religion which they confess, and Master whom they serve, are set more eminently before mankind, a have immensely enlarged opportunity.

It is hardly more than a hundred years since the death of Hyder A the energetic Indian prince who long baffled the English, and swept Carnatic with irresistible hosts to the gates of Madras; and it is yet a hundred years since the Lord Cornwallis who had surrendered Yorktown overcame the successor of Hyder Ali, and gained import territorial concessions. The Mahratta war, in which the English w at last led by Wellesley, and in which the Mahratta power was brol at the wonderful battle of Assaye, terminated little more than eig years since. It is scarcely twenty-seven years since the suppressio the Sepoy Rebellion, and the transfer of the government of India fr a commercial company in London to the Council representing Crown. And now that vast and fruitful land, of immemorial fame song and story, before whose rivers and mountain-ramparts the c queror of Asia reluctantly paused, with an area twenty-five times t of England, and with ten times its population,—nearly a seventh c

population of the globe, — is as subject to Great Britain as any part of it ever was to Akbar or to Aurungzebe. Not to the Portuguese or to the French, both of whom had early posts on its shores, but to our kinsmen across the sea, has come this vast expansion of empire. We know how keenly modern diplomacy feels the spur and the check of the fact; with what sensitive vigilance England at this hour watches the frontier across which suspected foes may march — not seeking Delhi or Calcutta, but seeking so to embarrass Great Britain that she may not again forbid to Russia an open outlet from the Euxine. Such a march would aim to fetter at Herat the muscle which shuts the gates of the Hellespont.

In India itself has been a complete and memorable change in the relations of the dominant power to Christianity and to heathenism. We know how our first missionaries thither were repulsed by the English authorities. This sprang from no personal animosities. It was not an act of national jealousy, or of capricious passion. It represented the attitude of those authorities toward Christian missions. Lord Macaulay described this, with an eloquence not surpassing its truth, in one of those remarkable speeches in Parliament which opened an era in Indian affairs. "Some Englishmen," he said, "who have held high office in India seem to have thought that the only religion which was not entitled to toleration and to respect was Christianity. They regarded every Christian missionary with extreme jealousy and disdain, and they suffered the most atrocious crimes, if enjoined by the Hindu superstition, to be perpetrated in open day. It is lamentable to think how long, after our power was firmly established in Bengal, we suffered the practices of infanticide and suttee to continue unchecked. We decorated the temples of the false gods. We provided the dancing girls. We gilded and painted the images to which our ignorant subjects bowed down. We repaired and embellished the car, under the wheels of which crazy devotees flung themselves at every festival to be crushed to death. We sent guards of honor to escort pilgrims to the places of worship. We actually made oblations at the shrines of idols."

These, remember, are the words, not of a religious enthusiast, but of the accomplished orator and statesman, who knew India historically as thoroughly as Burke, who knew it also, as Burke did not, by personal observation; who had held important office in it, and had done for it a work the blessing of which outlasts his life. Against the political disesteem of Christianity which he described, the Christian conviction *and feeling of England incessantly* but doubtfully strove. It was by *degrees limited in expression, though* hardly subdued in interior energy, *until the late terrific rebellion, largely* religious in its origin, which

note the entire English heart as almost no other event had done, artling with terror or wasting with anguish multitudes of homes, rced tendencies to their crisis, and planted the English government India, plainly and solidly, for all time to come, on the side of hristianity. Missions, churches, training-schools, colleges, are now nsistently protected and helped. The religion of the Queen has its ipreme place in those vast dominions; and the secular control, which as always precarious till that issue was reached, is henceforth secure. ar never teaches Christianity, but it sometimes opens the way for its rtherance, as forest-fires expose the soil to the seed of the husbandan; and ever and anon we are taught in our time, as John was in atmos, that there continues One above, before whom goeth a sharp vord, and who hath his name written "King of kings."

The extension of English power in Australia, though less tragic and cturesque, sustains relations almost equally important to the lvancing cause of the Master. It is not yet a hundred years since e first English penal colony was established in New South Wales, mposed of some hundreds of transported convicts, with a military ard of two hundred soldiers. Such a colony was, of course, inert d sullen, without enterprise or hope, or any desire save of successful utinous escape; and in twenty-five years the explorations proceeding om it only covered an area fifty miles wide. At this day the Island ontinent of Australia, with a territory as large as that of our country cluding Alaska, with a sea-coast line of eight thousand miles, is der exclusive British control; a control largely exercised by its habitants in their several provinces, but beneath the constant otection and sovereignty of Parliament and the Queen. It has mmerce, manufactures, mines, coal-beds, the richest wheat-fields, chards producing all manner of fruits, with wholly unmeasured sture-lands. It has grammar-schools, colleges, universities, as well superb asylums and churches, opulent cities, Parliament-houses; ore than six thousand miles of railway; more than forty thousand iles of telegraph, knitting together its separated districts, and nnecting them momently with the intelligent life of the world. And possesses incalculable resources of gold, copper, iron, lead, tin, silver, icksilver, zinc, with several species of precious stones. Its exports 1882, to Great Britain alone, were more than a hundred millions of llars ($100,153,795), and this was reckoned less than one half its tal export. The Bay of Port Philip, at the head of which stands the ty of Melbourne, with a population of more than three hundred ousand, was only discovered in 1802. For a long time afterward it *is rarely* visited; and the Province of Victoria was constituted but *le more* than thirty years since. Already that province h

distributed in the world more than a thousand millions of gold, while the English home-life has become to it as native as to Devon or Kent, and its public institutions of education and humanity are exemplary to mankind.

A white population of two and a half millions is already on the insular continent which began the century with prospects so dismal and ignoble; and the future of the states which are there to be formed no imagination yet can picture. It is only certain that they must bear, to the end of their history, whatever political independence they may assert, the stamp of that English civilization, Christian and Protestant, by which they were initiated, and by which their early society has been moulded. The vast communities which, for all time to come, are there to replace the heathen bushmen or the more heathen convicts of a hundred years since, must give elevation, while time continues, to the cause of that Master whose truth is as familiar there as here, whose spirit works with freest force through charities and churches, and the symbol of whose cross is blazoned above with nightly splendor amid the stars.

Of New Zealand, the constitution for which was sanctioned by Parliament as late as 1852, and of Tasmania, whose name was only given it in 1851, the same may with equal confidence be said.

It is also to be observed that while such changes have been proceeding in distant lands, on the Continent of Europe the supreme fact of modern politics is the unification of Germany, under the lead of Protestant Prussia, and its expansion into a vast centripetal power, which becomes the chief arbiter in European disputes, and from which influence streams afar, in widening waves. The reviving of spiritual faith in Germany, and of an eager missionary temper, appears significantly in simultaneous development with this sudden change in the military prestige and political eminence of the reorganized empire. In France, too, in Italy, to some extent in Austria and in Spain, the Protestant spirit is extending, not as a force of negation and destruction, but as instinct with the energy of faith; while the political aspirations which impel the peoples toward freedom in the state are noticeably associated with religious aspirations which can only find content in the submission of hierarchies to the wisdom and will of the Christian communities. In France, especially, this is apparent; and it will not be strange if thirty years hence that chivalric nation, in which an inbred spirit of freedom has always survived, and which more and more is to find in the law and the truth of the Master the only guaranty of republican institutions, should furnish its eager messengers in multitudes to proclaim to the world the Lord of Liberty, as he was set forth in robust doctrine by Huguenot preachers, as he was honored in final self-sacrifice

In general, it must be said that nothing is clearer in the history the century than that the nations by whom Christ is honored, and whom his glory in the gospel appears, are most rapidly advancin while in Russia itself, with its confused complex of races, languag and hostile religions, its fierce socialism, and the contempt which Nih ism nourishes for spiritual things, the only hope for a vital developme of liberty and progress lies in Bibles and schools, an instructed cler an intelligent worship. The problems there to be encountered a formidable, almost beyond compare. The path to be trodden, we m well apprehend, lies through passages crowded with conspiracy, echoi with punishment, swimming in blood. But moral forces have co quered heretofore when the chaos of society seemed more despera than there; and the power which lifted European States out of t savage and slimy barbarism which followed the fall of the Weste Empire may be trusted to raise and remould society even in th portentous empire which confronts the world of civilized stat with its enormous strength, guided by Hellenic craft and govern by Asiatic traditions. Irresistible tendencies, silent as light, b inexorable as the power which pulls planets in their orbits, make t moral courage and insight of peoples the spring and measure of pub freedoms; and the faith which connects men with invisible spher and declares the kingship of a Lord in the heavens, will dissolve tyranny which bombs could not shatter, and lift to new levels regenerated state.

Of course, too, it is a fact, as familiar as journals can make it, th regions unexplored at the outset of the century are now traversed a mapped; so that the vast African Continent, to take one illustratic of whose interior almost nothing was known by the last generation, h again and again been pierced and crossed, under primary impulse fro missionary faith, and is better understood in its rivers, lakes, a mountain-systems than is to-day the interior of Australia, than w when this society was organized our own country beyond the Missou Regions which half a century since were inaccessible to Christianit almost equally so to secular commerce, now welcome both, like Chi and Japan. Corea is not far from following in their steps. The glo is more compact than it was; and the distances between its separat parts, as related to the travel and the enterprise of man, are vastly dim ished. India, four months away from Boston when our missionari first sought it, is now hardly four weeks away. By the telegraph may hourly whisper to it, across continents and seas. Australia a New Zealand are as near to us now as they then were to India. Egy is only a European suburb. It is probable that ere long a Pana Canal will have brought near our shores the Pacific archipelago

the western coasts of South America. Railways, steamships, telegraph lines, encircling the earth, have almost literally bound it into a smaller compass; so that any influence constitutionally fitted, as the gospel is, for cosmical distribution, has now an opportunity such as never before was even imagined for making itself at home in all lands. Remote districts affect directly ancient and rich commercial centres. Distant populations, in lands which respond to an unskilled labor, come to competition with the artisans of countries whose production is scantier, their labor more costly, their machinery more elaborate. Financial stricture, in the more advanced regions, is a natural effect; and the tendency to this can hardly be reversed till a widely uplifting moral education, at once expanding and refining desire, has opened new markets for the thoughtful fabrics of civilized lands. Languages, too, are incessantly intermixed in the knowledge and use of men. The ancient tongues of India and China are subjects of study in American colleges; while our historic English language, which became the willing servant of the gospel five centuries ago, and which has ever since been ennobled by the service, is more widely understood and employed in the earth than at any previous period of history.

It seems impossible not to feel that all these signs point directly to the more and more rapid distribution of the gospel, the more wide and clear exhibition of the Master to the mind of mankind. Mechanical instruments never are ultimate. They are signs and servants of a paramount moral life. Those which are now appearing in the world are here as forerunners of spiritual change; and the divinest change of all is that to which their swifter wheels and louder trumpets seem palpably related. The mountains have been leveled, and the valleys have been lifted, as if to prepare the way of the Lord; and here are the wheels for a chariot more royal than any which carry earthly kings, the trumpets for a message so sweet and grand as the earth before never has heard!

It is another significant fact, which points the same way, and which has peculiar interest for us, that our nation, which was founded in faith, and built up by prayer and early sacrifice, and in which the Lord, from the first age to this, has been known and been honored, is now more prominent and more influential in the confederacy of civilized states than ever before; and that the impulses starting from it affect continually more distant peoples. I cannot but think that this has *a bearing,* of great importance, not only on our obligation to the *service which convenes us to-night,* but on the prospect of rapid *dvance in the proclamation of* the Lord to all peoples.

This Board was instituted, as we are aware, by the General Associa-

tion of this State in the summer of 1810. It was fully organized the first meeting in Farmington, in the following September, five me bers being present. Its first missionaries were ordained in Februa 1812, and sailed a little later for India. The Act of Incorporati which gave to the Board its legal existence was passed by the Legis ture of this State, after prolonged opposition, and was approved by t Governor, in June, 1812. It had therefore begun its work before began its legal being; and the spirit of faith and hardy enterpri manifested then has never since failed. This spirit becomes t more remarkable when we recall the public circumstances by whi at first it was environed.

It is difficult for us to bring before us, otherwise than in the vagu outline, the poverty, weakness, obscurity of the nation as it then was, to set these in any fair comparison with the power and fame which n it commands. The census of 1810 showed a population of less th seven and a quarter millions (7,239,881) in the country at large; 33,2 in this town of Boston, which was not a city till twelve years lat The population of the country has now risen, we know, to nearly quite sixty millions; and we have only to look around us to see h this typical American city has splendidly advanced, in numbers, wealth, and in all that enriches and embellishes life. It was then o twenty-one years since the establishment of the Federal Governmen less than twenty-seven years since the British troops had evacuat New York. The National Capital had been ten years established the swamps and uplands beside the Potomac, and was a muddy a straggling village, containing eight thousand people, most of the cooks and caterers to Congress, or clerks in the departments. Loui ana had been bought from the French seven years before, coveri nominally vast regions west of the Mississippi; but the area of o territory on which white settlers had pitched their tents was le than one third of what is now being rapidly occupied. Four Stat only had been admitted to the Union since the adoption of the Fede Constitution; the last of the four being Ohio, which a Massachuse colony began to subdue not a hundred years since, which in 1810 h a population of two hundred and thirty thousand (230,760), in whi to-day are three and a half millions of people, holding property of assessed value, by the last census, of $1,534,360,508. Indiana, Illino were recent Territories. Missouri was not even a Territory; and was only after more than a quarter of a century that Wisconsin a Iowa received their primary organization. Louisiana was not admitt as a State till 1812; nor Mississippi till five years later; nor Maine t 1820. Michigan, as a State, is not fifty years old. In 1826 it h *fifteen* thousand inhabitants, with one Presbyterian minister. In

the first congregation of white men was assembled at the hamlet which since has been known as Chicago, the nearest ministerial neighbor of its pastor being a hundred and fifty miles away. The powerful States beyond the great river, whose influence on the national development is to be predominant, when this Board began, and long after, were wilderness-wastes, the home of savages and wild beasts. California, of course, was no more thought of as ever having organic relation to our national life than New Zealand now is; and no dream of the future anticipated as possible the wealthy and populous commonwealths which already abut upon the shores of the Pacific.

Our government was still so weak on the ocean that it only lately had ceased to pay tribute to the Barbary pirates, to protect or ransom our ships from their clutches. The Dey of Tripoli, a few years before, had declared war against the United States, as if their power and rank in the world only equaled his own. Mediterranean piracy, in its attacks on our merchant marine, was not suppressed till five years after this Board was instituted. The first successful steamboat had stirred its paddles in American waters only three years before the meeting at Bradford, and the form of transportation which it provided was still regarded, even on sheltered lakes and rivers, with ridicule or with fear. In 1812 war was declared against Great Britain, the prices of products rose enormously, specie retired out of sight, the development of the country was sharply checked, and its commerce appeared fatally smitten. In 1814 the city of Washington was captured by the British troops, and the public buildings, with the Library of Congress, were ruthlessly destroyed.

A few figures may set before us more distinctly than words the comparative amount of our early resources, as measured against what they now are. In the five years following 1810 the average annual coinage of the nation was $800,419. In the five years past the average annual coinage has been $86,616,400. The specie value of the average annual net imports of the country in the five years which followed 1810 was less than $49,000,000 ($48,869,399). In the last five years the same annual average has been $721,881,523. The average annual value of domestic exports in the earlier period was $30,618,196. In the last five years it has risen to $823,482,316. The average annual receipts of the government in the five years after 1810 were $13,088,543, including loans. The same average annual receipts in the last five years, when no loans have been needed, have been $373,328,321.

Such facts, of course, indicate the change from our earlier feebleness as a nation to our present public power and wealth. But no description, unless extending over volumes, could fairly present this. You know how our boundaries have been carried afar, to the Rio Grande, and the

Northern Pacific; what enormous augmentations of private weal have come from prairie and ocean, from coal-field and cotton-field, fro the wheat and the oil, from furnace and mine. You know how citi have sprung as by magic into power and riches, and have drawn themselves immense populations, representative of all countries; ho commerce and manufactures have on all sides expanded, while railway telegraphs, and telephone-lines have knit together separated states mo closely than Barnstable and Berkshire were united when the "Harmony sailed from Philadelphia, or the "Caravan" from Salem. You know, to how the few colleges of the day when this institution began its wo have become the three hundred and seventy colleges and universiti of our time, with sixty-five thousand students, and $50,000,000 of pro erty in grounds, buildings, and equipment; how, for one or two theolo ical seminaries then recently in existence, to train men to interpret a teach the gospel, the number of those representing the various Pr estant communions was two years since a hundred and twenty-seve with more than four thousand students; and how ten and a half millio of children are enrolled in our public schools. The growth of t periodical press, the multiplication and enrichment of libraries, t incalculable advance in the production and circulation of books, a matters familiar.

The greatest of all the secular changes witnessed here has been, course, the destruction of the slavery which twenty-five years a seemed firmly established on our national domain. The change can well-nigh as suddenly as the flame in which a meteor expires; but was so complete that already it is hard for the younger among us to reco nize the fact that such a system here once existed. The preacher the annual sermon before this Board in the autumn of 1861 — that ho of darkness in the national conflict against rebellion — ventured to pr dict that it was slavery which must fall in the issue of the struggle, a not our benign and venerated Government; that, in fact, the temp here to be erected to universal freedom was to receive its statelie pillars from the shattered strength of the then defiant and disdainf Rebellion.

Men wise and honored, then in our councils, felt such words untimel if not immodestly overbold. Only fifteen months later came the edi of Emancipation, based upon principles of natural righteousness, thou cautiously justified by military necessity; and little more than two yea after, the submission of those who had been in rebellion gave the edi effect throughout the land. The glacial period in our national develo ment, which had refused to give way before whatever increase of ligh terminated thus in resounding catastrophe; but God's purpose was m palpable in the event than if it had come through more gradual proc

while it left behind it fruitful fields, already responding to the touch of free labor, a clearer sky, a balmier air, and the prophecy of ages of vital unity and harmonious progress. Remembering that not quite half a century has yet passed since a famous and resolute leader of the movement which fought against slavery was dragged through these streets with a rope round his neck, and was saved from death by being thrust into jail, we well may marvel at the suddenness of the sweep with which slowly combining but omnipotent forces broke the confirmed strength of the system, and buried it beneath the red waves of war. We need never despond again before difficulties, or be faint-hearted before any resistance. Polygamy will go from the regions which it defiles as surely, perhaps as suddenly also, when the time has come, as slavery went.

It is natural, then, it has been inevitable, that the place of our nation among the peoples of the world should have vastly changed since the birth of this institution. It has notified those peoples of the power which is in it to meet the sharpest and sternest crisis, and is henceforth assured against outward assault. Within itself it has taken coherence; and what appeared a limited alliance of distrustful states, though with potency and promise of an organic union, has been indissolubly organized by the irresistible progress of events. The bivouac of emigrants has been replaced by settled communities; the communities are crystallized into a Nation. It has a sense of public personality quite unknown a hundred years since, and of the weight which properly belongs to its counsel and will, in what concerns civilized progress. With the deepening consciousness of its relations to the history of the world is sure to come a more active impression of large responsibilities, with a higher aspiration for the renown won by states which lead the race toward happier futures. Even now the influence exerted by it is one of the factors in a new civilization, surpassing its bounds. The ideas which have here been organific begin to assume a cosmical prestige. Republican institutions, popular education, the freedom of religion by its severance from the state, the power of free Christian instruction in national development — in Europe, especially, these elementary forces in our public advancement are observed and honored, and efforts are made to secure and extend them. A drift that way, silent and strong, is in civilized society, plain as the curving swing of the Gulf Stream across the Atlantic, and tending, like that, to brighten with beauty and clothe with verdure inhospitable coasts. The movement is one natively independ- *ent of spec*ial efforts of individual minds. It did not start, even, with *the powerful impulse received from* our history. It ranks among those *neral movements of humanity* whose impersonal force augments as *y proceed, and which cannot be* stayed, however they may now and

then be diverted, by either military or moral resistance. The change which it portends are certain to multiply the influence of our nation and to magnify its fame, in the periods to come.

It is clearly to be observed, too, that while such movements hav been in progress, here and abroad, the development of Christian convic tion in our land, and of Christian institutions, has kept well in front o this extraordinary advance in the elements of power, and of this vas change in the attitude of the nation. It is a development which point distinctly to a missionary enthusiasm to be by-and-by, perhaps speedily evoked, which shall be wide in extent, intense in aspiration, prodigal i endeavor, finding its instruments in the wealth of the country, its grea opportunity through the place of this in the world. Remember that i 1800 there were but three thousand and thirty local churches in th land, which in 1880 had grown to be ninety-seven thousand and ninety For twenty-six hundred and fifty-one ministers at the earlier date, ther were almost seventy thousand (69,870) five years ago; and in place o three hundred and sixty-five thousand (364,872) communicants at the out set of the century, there were more than ten millions (10,065,963) in 188c The ratio of communicants to the whole population, which was only on in more than fourteen when the century began, has risen nearly to on in five; so that, with all our advance in numbers and wealth, the advanc in the special spiritual culture which Christianity fosters has surpasse it. No mistake is more serious, though none more common, than tha which affirms or suspects a decline in the relative power of religion her since the colonial period passed. The movement has been strongly i the opposite direction; and while I am no more blind than others t the evils which surround and the dangers which threaten us, while know how cities seethe with vice, and country districts often grow care less of the faith of the Fathers, how socialism is breeding amid th passions of ignorance, and a spiritual theism without Christ is th delusive dream of culture — I doubt if another example can be found o the power of the gospel, exerted through years, and on a large scale more signal than is shown in the influence it has gained over our ener getic and daring democracy, which has counted it no task to conquer continent, and which to-day confronts the world with its veins full o blood, and its temper instinctively hating control.

The birth and the growth here of great Christian institutions, durin the lifetime of many present — to distribute the Bible, to make th press serve the cause of the Master, to set preachers of the gospe along the frontier, to cover the land with Sunday-school teaching, b leading sailors to Christ to purify the circulating blood of the world, — these illustrate the breadth and power of the Christian faith, born o the Spirit, which secular reverses have only intensified, which sec

successes have never subdued. The establishment of a hundred thousand Sunday-schools in the land, within less than a century, with nine millions of scholars and teachers, is a fact of simply amazing proportions. The extension of the system to Continental Europe, under an impulse starting from our country, is full of significance. With the new prominence of the nation in the world, and the new desire stirring in it to quicken and guide the progress of mankind, it may surely be expected that this widening force of evangelical conviction will assert itself in missions of an unparalleled extent. Liberality is not an exotic here. It is native and continental. It has already spent millions of money to adorn as well as subdue the land. It is ready now for greater things. The heroic spirit has shown itself among us, in an exhibition sudden and sublime; asking little and giving much, shrinking from no risks, and freely offering life for great purposes. And it is to this liberal and heroical temper that the Lord of the Gospel makes preëminent appeal. The alabaster box, broken for him, perfumes the world. The soldier of the truth, the martyr for it, are his honored servants; not the spiritual miser who would sneak without sacrifice into his fellowship. And when this heroic spirit appears, answering the appeal of his cross and his glory, and kindling souls with celestial fire, the sweep of American missions on the globe must be like the rush of an ocean of light when the bars of darkness have been unloosed.

I cannot think it exaggeration to say, in view of the changes thus occurring within the century, that the astonishing preparation of the world for the first proclamation of the Master in it is now followed, if not surpassed, by a majestic preparation of mankind for such a testimony to be given to him as hitherto no dream of the heart has imagined to be possible. The establishment and extension of the Roman Empire at the time of his advent, the simultaneous prevalence in cultivated communities of the Greek language, with that prolific and fascinating literature which made it a unique educational force, the sudden and wide dispersion of the Jews to different parts of the civilized world, — these are recognized by all historical students as giving at least extraordinary opportunity, by most as giving divine facilities, to the apostolic presentation of the Master. The marvelous secular progress of mankind in the last eighty years, the unexpected advancements or recessions of states, with the closer connections arising between them, and the opening of all lands to the moral forces dominant in Christendom — these give an equally majestic opportunity, in our time, for the furthest and swiftest exhibition of him in whom the world has its help and its hope. *Gradual preparation, ultimating* in sudden consummation, is often *God's method in history.* It was so before the coming of the Master. *It was so before the* conversion of the Empire. It was so

signally, before the Reformation. It seems to be so in our day. A expectation of change, imminent and beneficent, has for three gene tions been brooding in the air. The popular discontent in the mo oppressed states has been one of its expressions. Revolutionary whir and swift conquests of natural obstacles, have equally shown it. Tl vast outbreak of missionary enterprise in all parts of Christendom h had in it incentive and succor. It has uttered itself among us, in st ring speech, in the wrestle with nature for her secrets, and in the tran of liberating armies. Unless we practically dismiss the thought of a Divine plan in the world we can hardly, I think, escape the impressi that such an expectation is a forerunning gleam from illustrious des nies; that ancient promises are drawing near to their fulfilment; a that as the Lord, at the time appointed, did suddenly appear in h temple, when the world was looking everywhere else for what it neede so now he is again to be shown, in greater glory, Ruler of Natior King of Saints. Certainly there has not been a time, since the wor of the text were spoken to apostles, when his command came to his f lowers with a more impellent imperative force: "Ye shall be witness unto Me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and un the uttermost part of the earth." The tenderness and the majesty his Divine personality, only more evident across the track of troubl centuries than in the day when Peter preached or Paul wrote his lette to the churches, seem surely destined, with increasing rapidity, enlighten and renovate the inhabited world. It is not an unwarrant enthusiasm which expects it. The conclusion comes from the study history; from the clear observation of the light which increasingly ir diates the lands from this King in his beauty; from indications palpable in the progress of the race for the last hundred years as is t sum climbing through mists toward the meridian. "VEXILLA REG PRODEUNT": The royal banners forward go! We are following o whose standard goes down before no onset, because upheld by immor hands; and the slow and stately movement of centuries has in our tir quickened to swift majesty of march, to carry to supremacy the lo ship of Christ! If this is not true, the casual connection of fortuito events leaves history the most baffling of puzzles, and the "philosoph of it a word without meaning.

What reason we have, then, Fathers and Brethren, for gratitude God, and for devout recognition of his wisdom, as we look back to t fearless beginnings of this institution! It came, as no man can he but see, even as the Lord himself had come, in "the fulness of t time"; at just the juncture when all these movements, which ha challenged since the attention of mankind, were ready to break in sudden exhibition upon the world's stage. Unknown of men,

unsuspected, they were even then divinely foreseen. A shadowy, half-prophetic sense of something great erelong to appear, such as often has preceded the great revolutions in human affairs, may have been stirring in sensitive spirits; as if a diffused, impalpable impulse had been pushed before it by the divine energy, about to intervene for mighty change; as if a breath of the divine Spirit made the stimulated air vaguely vibrate, before it reached articulate expression in transcendent effects. But no distinct outlines of the coming events were apparent to those who combined for this work. The usual order was strangely reversed. Here it was first the spiritual, afterward the natural. The revivals which had preceded, and out of which sprang their missionary spirit, had prepared the force for which the subsequent secular development was to furnish the instruments. The first year's income of this institution, of less than a thousand dollars ($999.52), appeared a mere speck on the sky. The average income of the first five years, from gifts and legacies ($9,388.74), gave little promise of the ten millions a year ($9,792,495) now gladly given by Protestant Christians, here and in Europe, through more than eighty organizations, for the furtherance of missions in heathen or Mohammedan lands. The few missionaries first entering the field could nowise have been expected to become, within the lifetime of children then born, the great army of more than six thousand missionaries and assistants, with nearly thirty thousand (27,194) native helpers, now engaged in the service. And it would have appeared simply incredible that in the world, in which it has been affirmed by high authority that up to the year 1800 not a convert had been made by modern missions, there should be at this day three quarters of a million (752,152) of Christian communicants in native churches, while adherents to Christianity are counted by millions (2,283,700 two years ago) among those whose fathers, if they knew it at all, knew it only to repulse it with scornful hate. The rate of increase in these numbers is yet more surprising than the increase itself. It admits no parallel, and outruns expectation: — two sevenths of the number of communicants in Japan added last year; a hundred per cent. increase of the number in China within eight years; eighty-five per cent. increase in India within the decade.

Plainly, the efforts which seemed at the outset too small to be noticed by observers of society had a virtue and a significance far surpassing what worldly prudence could have surmised. They showed the emergence and swift contagion of a spirit whose force mathematics could *not measure,* because it involved an infinite impulse. By reason *of its celestial origin it simultaneously* appeared in different lands, and *verywhere with the expansive energy* proper to its supernal nature. *hose men and women, in scattered* villages, lowly homes, who were

inwardly pressed, by the glory of Christ and the peril of man, to me itate this work, to plan concerning it, to present it to others with ferve zeal, to give themselves to its accomplishment, were thus moving in tl line of more august plans than shrewdest statesman could have devise They were ministers of the Power which sees the end before the begi ning, and servants of a Cause in comparison of which all others of tl time were of local insignificance. They would have felt it presumpt ous to think that they in their weakness had been called to the kingdo like one of old, for such a time. But they had been, as truly as ar of those whose record remains in either Testament. If they had he their peace, deliverance and enlargement would have arisen, but fro another place. Because they yielded to divine incitements, and we not disobedient to the heavenly vision, they have the place which th hold to-day in our remembrance, and in the annals of the kingdom God. They take their rank among architects of history. They ha helped to establish new liberties in the world, to make homes happie societies nobler, to open immortality to the vision of men, to multip the companies which walk in white bearing palms, and to dome tl earth for human hearts with heavens more lustrous than the telesco searches. All honor to them that they yielded to the impulse whi pressed them to victorious struggle; that they eagerly seized, witho wholly comprehending, their great opportunity! All praise and gra tude be to Him who chose such fit instruments for his work, and wl initiated, in a weakness like that of the Babe in the manger, the fa extending, accelerating movement, which already has given a spiritu renown to what might have been a merely mechanical age, and f which all signs promise advance till the earth shall be measured by i unresting march!

What reason we have, too, and what imminent need, for such enthusiasm in our work, and such exulting expectation concerning it, even they, with all the fervor and height of their spirits, hardly cou reach! The great motives are always the same: allegiance to the Kin the jubilant sense of grateful service to him before whom angels wai desire to further the welfare of mankind, for this life and the next, ar to do whatever in us lies to crown the earth with that perfect socie which shall be as a city descending out of heaven from God. The motives have wrought with inspiring power, not upon our fathers alon but on many before, who trod in darkness rugged paths toward what the world seemed sure defeat, toward what to their faith was illustrio victory. The same motives are for us; and we are only then alli with those whose spirit and life are a treasure of the world when equally yield to unseen incentives, and are as eager in our service him to whom Christendom has become, through their teaching

work, the superlative witness. No other work touches like this whatever is noblest in superior souls. It wants the attraction of outward array. It lacks the splendor which justly environs courts or camps, or great historic councils of state. But the cause which is partly committed to us is the one which represents, amid the thick of human affairs, highest motives, ideal conceptions, the sense of things supreme and eternal, consultation for immeasurable cosmical welfares, fellowship with heroical spirits, and a transfiguring sympathy with God! If our souls do not grasp it, with perfect accord of every power, we miss the full inspiration of life; we fail to walk on the highest levels of experience and of purpose; we are careless before a privilege than which the angelic cannot be nobler.

But even enthusiasm rises to its climax when, after a long and stubborn contest, one sees the victory drawing near; when the mighty power which makes him its servant, and the tributary forces which invigorate his strength, come clearly to sight, and when the end for which he has striven is plainly at last within his reach. And such an enthusiasm, passionate and perfect, all servants of the Master should feel at this time, as significant histories and irradiated prospects conspire to assure their success in their work; as portents brighten on all the heavens of the swift advance, toward majestic accomplishment, of that supreme plan which shot new promise over the world through the words of the text, to the furtherance of which apostles and martyrs, and those who stood with them in faith and hope, have gladly given the magnificent service of crowded lives, bloodily crowned. We are self-condemned, for a sordid stupidity, if such an enthusiasm we do not feel; if all the power the Church possesses, of wealth and will, of illuminating thought and of consecrated life, are not flung into the contest which he whom we worship is pushing to victory.

Yet here is the point at which we seem most likely to fail. Intensity of spirit is what we need; but our zeal in the service seems in danger of falling disastrously behind our means and opportunities for its performance. It is not infidelity which we have to dread, however defiant or however ingenious. It is not organized heathen resistance. It is not supremely that hostility of the heart toward the purity of the gospel which is always to be encountered when the Master presents his peremptory claim. Over such resistances he has been moving, in conquering progress, from the beginning. They are no more vehement, and no more inveterate, than when the Empire took the Cross for its *standard,* or than when our savage piratical ancestors renounced their *idols for the service of Christ.* The sword of the Spirit, which was not *hivered against that hardness of* stone and iron, will not hereafter *nd or break. But what we have* to dread is inertness within. The

secular temper of the time infects the Church. The world, which was never so rich and alluring, is too much with us. We are disinclined to heroic enterprise. The Christian idea of rest by work, of nobleness by service, of the fulness of life by completeness of sacrifice, fails to inspire us. Even love to the Master, wanting simplicity, wants fire — becomes a sentiment, rather than a passion. So we are tempted to release ourselves from effort when the claim for that effort is most imperious. We easily persuade ourselves that the cause of the Master, with such histories behind it, and such openings before it, will go itself, without further toil and tears. We honor those who have purchased its astonishing progress in the past, with labor, struggle, and bloody sweat; but we feel that their zeal was not for us an imperative example; that a prosperity as abundant as ours brings rights and privilege, rather than duties; that the luxury of life is its natural sequence; and that to adorn our homes and churches, to seek for our households an elaborate culture, for our communities a rich equipment in whatever delights and decorates life, is not only within the lines of our liberty, but marks the limit of our duty to the world. We leave to the poor the great labors of love; to the lonely and sad the august and tender function of prayer; and if we continue to give at all it is under a sense of constraining obligation rather than in the glad abundance of exulting affection; if we pray at all, it is in the temper of vague acquiescence in a divine plan, not with the fervent, effectual prayer which availeth much. The world will no more be converted to Christ, the Master will no more be exhibited to it, through such inert and languid endeavors, than a star in Andromeda will be rounded into shining solidity without the pull of invincible attractions, with attendant whirls of flaming heat.

We must have again the early enthusiasm, only exalted and intensified in us, if we would do the Christian work for which our times commandingly call. We must rise to the point of rejoicing consecration which our fathers reached; of which our missionaries give inspiring example; which some of the Middle Age conspicuously showed; of which the apostles gave supreme illustration. We must have again the vision of Him upon whose head are many crowns, and in devotion to whom is the splendor of life! It is largely the function, I cannot but think, of Christian women to inspire and sustain such an enthusiasm, in the service of One to whom their sex has owed so much. Woman represents, and largely is, the conscience and the heart of Christendom. Conviction in her has spiritual efficacy. Love kindles judgment, and high purpose is sublimated in passion. More than man she beat down slavery in this country. More than man she is *to mould* the future of the world.

It is no mere figure of speech which presents the Church as

Bride of Christ; and which shows the Woman, seen in Heaven, arrayed with the sun, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. Now, more than ever before, the Earth of the prophecy helps the Woman, and gives to her immense opportunity. The shining and stimulating fervor of spirit in matrons and maidens, to whom had been revealed the heavenly Lord, has been to this Board a beauty and a power from the beginning; never more than in the late years. Their delicate hands hold at this hour, I firmly believe, the levers which must lift the moral and Christian civilization of the world. It is theirs to set in swifter motion the wheels of beryl, vivid with life, which are under the Throne: theirs to open before advancing tribes and peoples the gates of light. With that intense and exhilarating temper of which we already have felt the blessing, universal among them, and subtly diffused through homes and congregations, the appearing brightness will be as the appearance of the bow in the cloud in the day of rain; for the one thing wanting to the Church of our day will at last be supplied — its desire will equal its power, its zeal will match its mighty occasions!

Then nothing can check its triumphant advance. Then the vast progress of Christendom in the past, since the text was uttered, will be to us full of energetic incentive. Then the majestic movement of Providence, as evident around us as ever in history, will be as the mystic supernal column which marched before Israel, lucid by night as well as by day, never arrested by crest or chasm, consecrating the path along which it guided. Then we shall enter an unspeakable fellowship, unknown before in its sovereign fulness, with Him whom we victoriously serve, whose death has been the life of the world, whose cross its diadem; in whose ascension, for us as for apostles, the heavens bloom; and who, as surely as night and day succeed each other, will bring the work, which He still watches from unseen heights, to its majestic consummation.

For this, then, let us labor and pray: that we may be endued with the power from on high which God can supply, which spirits whose life was hid in him have exultingly felt. May this very city, of the Puritan's love, and of our pride, be the Jerusalem in which the supreme energy shall be felt; this meeting the Pentecost, from which hearts inspired and interpreting tongues shall go afresh to all the earth! And unto Him who arose from the world, blessing it as he went, whom its arts and kingdoms have always to serve, and who is surely to come again for universal dominion in it, be now and ever all the praise! Amen.

The Condition of the Heathen and their Conversion.

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD AT

DES MOINES, IOWA, OCTOBER 5, 1886.

BY

REV. J. L. WITHROW, D. D.

PASTOR PARK STREET CHURCH, BOSTON.

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SERMON.

"GENTILES, UNTO WHOM I NOW SEND THEE, TO OPEN THEIR EYES, AND TO TURN THEM FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT, AND FROM THE POWER OF SATAN UNTO GOD, THAT THEY MAY RECEIVE FORGIVENESS OF SINS." — *Acts xxvi: 18.*

OUR duty to do a given thing for others may depend upon different considerations. Whether necessity requires it should be done, whether it is more urgently needed than something else, and whether, if we decline, it will be done, and all the better, by somebody else.

1. The first question is whether necessity requires that a given thing be done by us for others. It is a plain dictate of prudence to inquire whether the applicant for alms, or suppliant for some other sort of assistance, is in need of the aid that is asked. There is much imaginary want in the world. There are many misrepresented circumstances of necessity. What benevolent heart here has not been moved by stories of destitution and desolation which he afterward discovered had never an existence? Or if they had, the account of them was grossly exaggerated in order to excite the sympathies of the benevolent. Let the intelligence be circulated that by pestilence, epidemic, or earthquake falling on a community, thousands in a distant city have been made homeless and are hungry, and the prompt impulse of generous souls everywhere is to subscribe liberally for their relief. And when there is any hesitation in showing such open-heartedness, to what do we attribute it? Mostly to the fact that sometimes there have been appeals for aid that were louder than real need required. Hence, prudence rather than parsimony may account for an occasional withholding. Are not our home missionary and

church building societies sometimes stinted in extending their work in frontier towns because people have come to think that there are already more church candlesticks than there are candles of the Lord burning out there in certain ambitious villages in the vast West? And do we doubt but our foreign missionary treasuries would be as presses that "burst out with new wine," if the heart of the Christian church was as full as the heart of Christ was of the thought that this is already a lost world? It has been recently quoted from the Rev. Dr. James Waddell Alexander, the distinguished predecessor of Dr. John Hall, that he said forty years ago: "The great mass of Christians in America take 'no real interest in foreign missions,' because of 'a secret skepticism as to the real danger of the heathen.'" We fear the remark has too much foundation in fact. Not that the distinguished divine who made it shared in that skepticism; for we know he did not. But ever since Satan in Eden asserted that man may sin and not be in any danger of dying, there have been intimations of the same untruth floating in the air and anæsthetizing the moral sense of men. And therefore when we read this revealed word of the risen Jesus, pointing Paul, and us, to the "Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," some inquire: Lord, is there any such darkness and dominion of sin and Satan resting on the Gentile world? But as the response is: "They walk in darkness; for the god of this world hath blinded the minds of those who believe not," therefore we ought to feel sure of the real danger of the heathen, and should haste to their rescue — unless, indeed, we may be excused to attend to more pressing needs nearer home. For we do not forget what inspiration asserts (1 Tim. v: 8): "If any provide not for his own, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

Furthermore, when we are solicited to do something for others, it is suitable if we inquire

2. Whether another stands ready to do it and do it better than we can, in case we should decline. If so, that would justify our refusal. Indeed, it should encourage, and even, under certain circumstances, compel our refusal. For, however we might lament to lose to ourselves the advantage of the undertaking, yet why should we imperil a sure success by putting our imperfectly skilled

hand to the work? We should not. If the priest and the Levite on the Jericho road knew certainly that the Good Samaritan was coming up behind on a horse, and had oil and wine and money with him for the wounded man, whereas they had neither; and if they were infallibly sure that this Good Samaritan was a nurse who never lost a case, whereas they had no confidence that they could carry the wounded man through, then they were quite justified in passing by on the other side. For, had their zeal for doing good been so great as to have compelled them to undertake the case, they might have killed the man before the skillful Samaritan got there. Have we not heard that unwise and unskillful counselors and teachers may turn a serious soul rather away than toward the straight gate in the solemn moment of religious awakening? It may be well for the worker while it is bad for the one worked on, if the Christian worker has none of the skill of Andrew to bring a brother to Jesus. And such had better not go for Simon at all as long as there is a wise Andrew waiting to do it at the opportune time. Is there one standing among you whose shoe's latchet no mortal missionary is worthy to unloose, who is certain in some future fullness of time to speak to every heathen heart, and so expose the scars on his side and nail prints in his palms that about every one of them will be melted and brought to penitence and trust? If so, then the confidence we have that he will much more successfully turn them from the power of Satan unto God than we can, justifies the conclusion that we may well afford to wait. We are familiar with the opinion that the progress of civilization and the prevalence of international law are bringing all mankind, by their discipline and developments, into as high social conditions and moral manners as will be needed to make this world a saved world. Many intelligent people are confident that the advances of natural and social science will soon transform the face of the whole earth, and cast the feeble and ineffective efforts of Christian missions into disrespect. Moveover, we observe the revival of an idea which dominated the minds of some good men at the time when modern Christian missions had their rise. The same idea that President Wayland writes of as arising out of "a spurious system of Calvinism," and the same that confronted the zealous Carey when he began to call on our mother country to give the gospel to the Gentiles. And that is: that if we but let the heathen alone, the Lord will

convert them by and by, if he shall see best. When William Carey's enthusiasm had kindled enough interest in the subject of missions to the heathen to draw together that memorable conference in Northampton, and when the eloquence of the young shoemaker rose to a very passionate pitch, as he plead "for the perishing pagans," you may recall how this idea of which I speak found voice in that assembly. Affronted at the earnestness of the young man, if not at his ignorance, an eminent minister cried: "Young man, sit down! When God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without your aid or mine." Is it the ghost of that "spurious system of Calvinism?" Is it lost and wandering echoes of that thundering rebuke by Dr. Ryland in the Northampton Conference which have reshaped themselves into the belief that whatever heathen we do not reach as Paul did a pagan in the prison at Philippi, Jesus Christ himself will reach, when he is pleased to, in the prison of the pit? If so, we may well obey the voice which bids us "sit down!" But suppose there is an uncertainty whether anything will be done if we forbear to work; an uncertainty whether commerce and science, public schools and jurisprudence, are competent to convert the pagan world to purity and peace with God; an uncertainty whether millions of human beings will escape eternal death if we do not run to their rescue, and warn them from "the wrath to come;" and a vast uncertainty whether there will be offers of grace beyond the grave. Then the question of duty becomes a very different one, and addresses us in the most categorical imperative.

For where something is waiting to be done, and there are none more competent than we are to do it, and especially if it be highly probable that unless we do it promptly it will never be done at all, then there is but one thing for a true man to do; do it instantly and the best he can. Is epidemic sweeping thousands out of a city every day? Then the veriest novice in medical science is needed, and should not shirk from the call of humanity. The clumsiest surgeon may be wanted, and welcomed, too, on a field of Waterloo. The ancient school-master who knew but the rudiments, and not much of them, was better far than no teacher at all in the rural towns of a long time ago. Heaven's blessing will rest upon the weakest hand that plucks a human brand from the burning, if there is no stronger hand stretched out to save. But if there is a stronger stretched out to save, the weaker should

withdraw, lest the brand slip from its feebler grip and be lost in the very presence of one who is "able to save unto the uttermost." Whatever may be said of the selfishness of the priest and Levite, the worst of their sin was that they passed by on the other side and left the man to die, when they did not know that the Good Samaritan and his medicine were near at hand. Therefore, if no man has either the information or the audacity in the absence of authority to guarantee that if we fail to turn the heathen, some one else will turn them; and if the darkness upon them is exceedingly more dense than where it lies deepest on Christendom; and if groping in that darkness, and groveling under "the power of Satan," our brothers in humanity are stumbling into hell "through the ignorance that is in them because of the hardness of their hearts," then the command of the Lord: "Go ye unto all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," carries not only the weight of his imperial authority, but also an abundant reasonableness to the mind of every true Christian, why the Lord Jesus should have uttered the command so urgently. Let us then consider somewhat the condition and conversion of the unevangelized ends of the earth.

1. They are living in sin. And, however much this may sound like a truism to you, there is need just now to say it over again; and to examine the statement until we shall be sure that unless the witnesses have been corrupt or incompetent, the case stands proven; that the pagan world lies in wickedness. Perhaps we may well begin with the thought, that if they are not sinners against the Most High they are better off without the gospel than we are with it. And in that event, for us to send them missionaries and the Bible to announce to them the glad tidings of salvation, is exceedingly more absurd than carrying coals to Newcastle; contributing money for a charity dinner for Dives; or Mrs. Jellyby's "telescopic philanthropy" for the natives of Borrioboola-Gha. Indeed, it seems more than absurd. Is it not a pitiful or a vulgar impertinence which the pagan world might properly resent and reply: "Physician, heal thyself!" But if the spirit of God moved the mind and made the logic of Paul when he "proved both Jew and Gentile that they are all under sin," then the case stands gravely different. If "sin is the transgression of the law," and if the Holy Bible solemnly asserts that the

Gentiles have "the law written in their hearts," and yet they have so "changed the truth of God into a lie," that "they are without excuse," then the case is closed and the verdict inevitable. Skepticism must either impeach the testimony of Christ's apostle and challenge the authority of these Scriptures of God, or else quit the contention and accept the fact that all mankind, barbarian, Scythian, bond, and free, stand guilty before God; "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." All men; the apostle meant, the same all that he referred to when he wrote: "In Adam all die." For Paul no more meant to limit these alls to the children of Abraham than he intended to limit them to those who have curly hair or high foreheads. His mind was not running on lines of national peculiarities; but was acting under the influence of the Holy Ghost, and that eternal word which was uttered; "*The soul that sinneth it shall die!*" No difference in what age, or nation; nor under what dim or dazzling rays of moral illumination, if only one knows to do good and does it not, to him it is sin.

What, then, is the testimony of those witnesses on whom we are wont to rely for information of idolatrous and unevangelized nations? Does Juvenal's satires on the sins of the Romans of his time read as if that pagan poet thought them not sins, but simply the reckless acts of moral idiots, whom neither God nor man should hold responsible? One of the moralists of Rome, whom modern times most often mention with approval, said, of the pagans of his day: "We have sinned, some grievously, others more lightly; some purposely, others accidentally impelled or led astray. And not only have we transgressed; we shall continue to do so till the end of life. It was the complaint of our ancestors; it is ours; it will be of our posterity that morals are subverted, that corruption reigns! The human mind is by nature perverse, and strives for what is forbidden." Such was Seneca's judgment of the moral condition of the world; without God and without hope, but not without sin. And let any who are given to doubt whether the heathen are already enough lost to be liable to all consequences of sin, go hence and bury themselves beyond the line of the light, and the saving influences of the lives of men under the gospel; go hence, where "darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people, and stay there for some years, eye witnesses to the ways of those sunken creatures.

And can you expect or imagine these gentle judges of the Gentiles returning, after such an experience, to say: "The pagans are quite an inoffensive people; they live in the unruffled peace of an approving conscience?" Rather might we not expect they would say, that no man can realize the sinfulness of sin in its grosser forms until he mingles in unevangelized communities and witnesses the heathen world lying in wickedness. Far be it from us to cast a stone at cannibals or Kaffres, at a Hottentot or a Hindu, as if they were the only sinners under the sun. But what we feel sure of is, that they are such transgressors of the will of the most high God as exposes them to his just judgment; under that statute of his which demands obedience, and under that violation of the statute which the inspired apostle referred to when he wrote: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." In the first sermon that was preached before the American Board by the illustrious President of Yale College, the preacher pressed his plea for public interest to be taken in missions with these words: "The necessity of the work irresistibly demands every practicable effort. The whole world 'lieth in wickedness' as a man lies weltering in his blood." And he further described a vast portion of the earth as "an immense field of death," "as a place of graves," as "a catacomb where souls are buried to wake no more." After a dismal picture of the temporal circumstances of sorrow and shame in pagan lands, Dr. Dwight then added: "But, my brethren, all this is comparatively of small moment. The great duty before us is to rescue men from sin and perdition." And whoever disputes, if any one does dispute, the correctness of that preacher's description, must join his debate with both the Old and New Testament word of God. For have not prophets, poets, and apostles given us equally gloomy pictures of the Gentile world? Have they not spoken (2 Kings xvi: 3) of "the abominations of the heathen," and of (Ezra vi: 2) "the filthiness of the heathen?" Do they not tell us these heathen (Ps. ix: 15) are "sunk in the pit," and that they (Eph. iv: 16) "walk in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts?" And can there possibly be any deepening of the picture of their guilt after what Paul says, that the heathen "being past feeling, gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work

all uncleanness with greediness?" Yes, there is, indeed, something to be added. And that is:

2. The heathen are wilful wrong-doers, and so are responsible. The basest of them know that they are morally base. A missionary, who was among the very first to enter interior Africa along the path which Stanley blazed, assured us that there, in the deepest darkness, he found that wrong-doers saw the light of moral duty; dimly, but actually offering itself for their guidance to the better day and way of life. They all know better than they do. It was a pagan philosopher who said of his people, "Our fault is not external to ourselves, it is within us and cleaves to our souls." And it was a pagan poet who wrote: "I see and approve the better, but follow the worse." Lecturing to the *elite* of the idolaters of the city of Bombay, President Julius H. Seelye eloquently said: "The voyager of life" (on heathen as on Christian seas) "has a chart on which his course is clearly traced; every peril is distinctly noted; light-houses stand along every dangerous coast; beacons blaze from every cliff. He has a compass which never varies, and the stars are shining where there is no sun." Then does not the sinner in Hindustan as surely as the sinner in this house know when he goes wrong? Certainly; for as the lecturer there and then added: "The trouble with human nature relates to the inner source and center of a man's moral purpose and moral life. It is not the intellect but the will that is at fault." Thus faithfully spake our honored countryman to the consciences of those cultured Hindus, and we do not hear that a single man of them disputed the doctrine or debated that the idolatrous millions whom they represented were without responsibility, because they have not all the advantages which have been afforded those who live under the influences of the gospel of Christ. And, if it be wondered why, in that assembly of cultured Hindus, there was not at least one so given to the arts of sophistry as to attempt a reply to this accusation against mankind, the only reasonable explanation that we can discover is, they knew in their very souls that "light-houses" do stand along the dangerous coasts of sin, in India, as surely as in America. They could not contradict the lecturer, because his figure of "beacons blazing from every cliff" was a forcible fact. And although the Sun of Righteousness had not risen with healing in his wings on the deeps of

the pagan world, yet their inmost souls admitted that brilliant point of the lecture: "The stars are shining where there is no sun." Preaching before the American Board in 1817, President Appleton said he would not assert what men might not do if they would make the best use of their intellectual powers to find out God. "But," said he, "what men may do is one thing, what they will do is another." To which we would add the utterance of the Rev. Dr. Shedd: "If the sinner hated his sin, nay, if he felt weary and heavy laden *in the least* degree because of it, he might leave it."

But how are we sure they know their doings are evil? Well, there was one who wrote under a higher guidance and safer impulse than pagan philosopher or Christian preacher ever did, who informs us of the fact, although he does not divulge the method by which they know moral light from darkness. For the Apostle to the Gentiles wrote: "That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them." But yet when they "knew God, they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened;" and while "knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." In answer to any sentimentalism that would minify the moral infamy of the idolatrous nations, and make way for a conclusion, by and by, that they are in no great need of conversion to secure their safety for eternity, let us read again the solemn indictment for intentional sin which the Scriptures contain to their charge; and also forecast the conclusion of the trial of the heathen at the bar above, if they shall as willfully continue in sin as they have hitherto continued in the course of human history. That conclusion is stated in these words: "As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." Perish, not because they have crucified Christ, or slighted the offers of the gospel, but because they knew better than they did, and "took pleasure in them that do such things." And therefore the next consideration of their moral condition is:

3. The heathen are under condemnation for their sins. Not *to be* condemned, but are condemned already; and as surely for what they have done evil and failed to do right, as a soul among us is condemned already "because he has not believed on the

only begotten Son of God." They are under condemnation for their own sins, not for ours! Were the Most High to condemn any soul to suffer punishment who is not an intelligent and intentional transgressor, his throne would fall out of the sky. But if any one, be he Bushman, or be he of Boston, is an intelligent and intentional transgressor and hears a voice, coming either from conscience or the cross, calling him to turn "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," then if he will not turn, either he must be condemned, or a rebellion would arise in all the ranks of the moral universe against the equity of the divine administration if another should be condemned. Either all intelligent and intentional wrong-doing must rest under divine condemnation, more or less severe, or otherwise none must. We cannot conceive of such a monstrosity in the judicial dealings of man with man as would say, that one may knowingly violate the law and be pronounced innocent, whereas another doing the same thing is guilty. It being so, that "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" and the heathen have "the law written in their hearts;" and knowing the judgment of God that they which commit such things as they do commit are worthy of death, still "do the same" — this being so, there is no escape from the conclusion that, if they are not condemned, no one can be. But they are under condemnation, not only as the Scriptures show, but also as their own actions indicate. An uneasy conscience can never be accounted for by subtleties of metaphysics, or speculations in moral philosophy, if knowledge of a living and holy God be denied as the effectual cause of its discomfort. Whether he be a troglodyte of Northern Africa, or a titled nabob or crowned head of Christendom, whoever shows by his life that his heart condemns him, does hereby plead guilty to conduct for which, if he is not pardoned, he can never have peace. And do missionaries say that the heathen have no uneasiness of conscience? Besotted in vice and quite bestialized in their moral sense, some of the deepest in degradation may suffer but little distress after sin. But when David Brainerd began to preach to the degraded Indians of the forest, did he not find that even they as sharply resented the statement that they were perishing sinners as white sinners in our city churches in the nineteenth century resent the same? Did not some of those red men then rave at the preaching until they became penitents, and then confess that all the time they were resisting they knew their

guiltiness? What do the rights and ceremonies and sacrifices of pagan religions signify? That they are in no particular apprehension of punishment? Count the costliness of their sacrifices, mark the tortures of their self-immolations, and, remembering the ages through which such agonies and outlays have been endured, tell us whether their inmost conscience does not bring them under a condemnation compared with which the sense of sin in sinners here is exceedingly light. Living within the circle of the sweet light which streams from a suffering Saviour, sinners in Christendom come to think that God is too good to execute sentence against sin. But where no tidings of dying love have been told to troubled transgressors there is nothing for them but a fearful looking for of judgment. And so the heathen crucify themselves in the hope of satisfying conscience, as he satisfied for it who was crucified for us. Surely it is true that the heathen are guilty and condemned, and are regarded by the Almighty as unreconciled, and exposed to whatever his infallible exercise of justice shall apportion them for their impenitence. What that may be, in different degree from the doom of those who here deafen their ears to the offers of grace in the gospel, we know not. Except this, by the word of the Lord himself; we are sure that such as without knowledge commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with only "few stripes." Meanwhile there is absolutely no escape for one who bows to the explicit oracles of God, that every responsible moral agent on earth, until he turns from Satan unto God, is under sentence of death. This is the teaching of Scripture. No unprejudiced reader will draw any other idea from its pages. It is and has been our evangelical understanding of the condition of man as he is under the moral government of God. And we believe emphatically what has been said by one of the ripest scholars of the Unitarian school in America: "That Orthodoxy cannot readjust its faith till it readjusts its estimate of the Scriptures."

To this let me add, that the enterprise of Christian missions to the unevangelized millions sprung out of the evangelical conviction that they are in sin and are perishing in their sins. Who can read the early literature of missions and miss seeing this, as a fundamental matter in the minds of those who first broke ground for a vineyard of the Lord on the wild waste lands of the world?

Did Vanderkemp go to Kafirland because he thought the Africans should be taught to wear more clothes and live more

civilly? Or did he yearn to offer them the attractions of the cross because he believed nothing less could turn them from darkness unto light, so long had they loved "darkness rather than light?" The latter was surely the holy ambition and high motive of that brave pioneer of missions. Did William Carey burn with zeal to excite England to establish Christian missions in India because he had heard that the Hindus had no public schools nor theological seminaries? Did the young men beside the hay-stack at Williamstown have as the burden of their prayer that God would open the way for them to go far hence unto the Gentiles to teach them metaphysics and philosophy? Or were their hearts aflame with love and longing to fly to the ends of the earth and tell the perishing that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him need not perish?" Riding along between Andover and Bradford, what may we conjecture was the topic of conversation between Drs. Spring and Worcester, at the forever sacred moment when the first suggestion of this American Board was made? Were they mutually grieving over it that the heathen were destitute of the decencies and amenities of social life, which they would surely get if missionaries should go to them? Nay, nay! Yea, if they heard in their hearts a loud echoing of the last utterance of their ascended Lord: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel," does any one doubt that the loudness of those reverberating echoes was due as much to the fact that they rolled up from a world in ruins, as that they rolled down from his heavenly world? All through the records of our early missionary enterprise, the reader is struck with repeated quotations of this Scripture, as descriptive of the heathen: "Sitting in darkness and in the region and shadow of death." It was the thought of "the lost millions," "without God and without hope," which weighed down the souls of those who, not counting their lives dear unto them, first began to sacrifice everything for the sake of saving some. When Samuel J. Mills turned from his plow and forsook the farm in Litchfield, he did it "to obtain an education for the purpose of carrying the gospel to the millions who perish." What would we not give for a report of the prayers which that young farmer so fervently offered while following along the furrows and holding the handles more and more loosely? Think you his heart went up to God for the poor heathen, because they had no social science associations, general

hospitals, nor free dispensaries for the development of high culture and the cure of the ills of the flesh? What a slander of his sacred memory would it be to cherish such a supposition for a moment. The more so that we are assured by his biographer that "the deliverance of one immortal soul from everlasting burnings" was what "enflamed his benevolent mind enough to compensate a thousand-fold for all the laurels of a Cæsar." It was "over the perishing millions," Dr. Gardiner Spring declares, that young Mills's "heart yearned." In like manner it was "the woeful condition of the heathen" that oppressed the heart of Samuel Newell. And the words of another of those first four missionaries, which the Board sent out, are yet more passionately expressive of the innermost thought which moved them all. For Gordon Hall effectively contrasted the labors of two noble philanthropists, who won immortal fame for what they did to relieve human misery in this world, with the labors of Christian missionaries who have a still loftier object in view. All honor, said Gordon Hall, will we give to a Clarkson for his labors in awakening the conscience of England and Christendom against the iniquity of the African slave trade; and all honor to Howard for his humane movement to ameliorate the condition of convicts. However, said he, the Christian missionary also carries to the destitute that which will mitigate temporal evils. "But this is not all; he labors for that which will redeem a vast proportion of the whole world both from temporal and eternal misery." It was not on temporal privations and race prostration in pagan lands that this holy and high-minded young disciple had his heart set to relieve them. Nay, it was both "temporal and eternal misery" which his anointed eyes saw impending and pressing upon the people. It was their wretchedness in sin and their exposure to the wrath of God, at the very moment when they might be turned from "the power of Satan unto God." It was this that affected and afflicted his loving heart. And so when he reached the distant land and had filled his eyes and his heart yet fuller with "the doleful condition of the heathen," how did he write? In a calm and calculating mood concerning the physical and social needs of the pagans? Rather did he not rise to such a fervor, in his letters to young men entering the ministry, that he felt fearful of being thought fanatical? So that he excused his earnestness with the words: "Dear brethren, bear with my freedom. Placed as I am in the midst

of so many millions of perishing heathen, I cannot forbear. Oh! fly for the salvation of the heathen. Persuade a thousand to come. Oh! brethren, hasten to the field!" What for? we ask. Because the Hindus would make better citizens if they professed Christianity than if they believe Buddha? Was it for that Gordon Hall prayed that a thousand missionaries might come and labor? Did he ache at heart only because he would have the heathen abandon their repulsive ceremonies and vulgar sacrifices, and adopt the church forms and creed faiths of New England Congregationalists? Away with a thought so unworthy of mention anywhere, but most unworthy when the work of those sainted pioneers of missions is in review. For whether we inquire of them, or of the illustrious line of prudential committee-men, or of the honored divines which have held executive office in the American Board, or whether we inquire of a host of holy men and women who have loved and labored so hard to support the treasury of the Board, we learn that all, in the old glory days of the past, felt as we have reason to feel, that the pagans are perishing, and there is not a moment to spare if we would rescue them from endless ruin.

Previous to the rise of modern missions, and owing to the prevalence of "a spurious system of Calvinism," some of the reformed churches of Christendom lay under the delusion that if the heathen are ever to be converted, the Lord will attend to it in his own time, and without the aid of any one. They regarded them as under a condemnation, which Christians could do nothing to lift or lighten. And so they looked on with dumb indifference, while seeing the pagan world sinking into perdition. But when that "spurious" narcotizing notion was dispelled by the blessed gospel, that "God is no respecter of persons," and that long before Calvary he commissioned his servants to say to all mankind: "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die!" "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but rather that all would turn and live;" and, therefore, said: "Look unto me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none" of your idols that that can save you — when the ears of our fathers were opened to hear these world-wide provisions of salvation, they shook off the lethargy and became fired with a consuming zeal to hasten to the heathen and cry: "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." Then, as before, they believed without a doubt that the sinning heathen are doomed because of their sins. But

thereafter they began to feel, as Paul did in his joy that some of the Gentiles might be saved; and so they hastened to tell them of Christ, thinking only of the blessedness of saving some; and waiting "until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Among the most remarkable theological articles we have seen lately, is one in the *Unitarian Review* (January, 1883), from the pen of the lately deceased and for many years the distinguished pastor of the First Church of Boston, the Rev. Dr. Rufus Ellis. In it he affirms that the teaching of Paul, so far as it relates to the ways of God with men, is so Calvinistic concerning human sin that "Paul was a Calvinist before Calvin;" and further, the essayist writes: "I am powerless and speechless here in the presence of Augustine and Calvin as interpreters of Paul." And what does this eminent Unitarian discover and declare to have been Paul's idea of the condition and conversion of the Gentile world? This, as I quote his exact words: "Paul was so absorbed in his preaching, and engaged to save all who should be saved — so filled with delight as he thought of the multitude predestined, called, justified, and sanctified by Christ, that he seems to have no mind for the rest. He does not propose to spend his days settling the questions whether all men are to be saved, and how this is ever to be brought about, or what there is in man to encourage such daring expectations." "*He knows that under God he can save some, and this one thing he will do.*"[1] And Paul, let us remark, was "the apostle to the Gentiles." And it was this Pauline conception of the grace of God that entered into those who organized modern missions and kindled their enthusiasm for saving the Gentiles, by turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified already. And this leads to a further point: that, however benighted the heathen are and perishing in their sins, yet

4. They are not under an exceptional and hopeless condemnation. They are just as we are by nature. An infant born in Afghanistan or in Abyssinia starts life in the same relation to God as one does that is cradled in London or New York. In his lecture on missions in Westminster Abbey, Max Müller said that

[1] This sentence is italicized by the preacher.

"every child born in Europe is as much a heathen as the child of a Melanesian cannibal." By which we understand him to mean the same as the school of thought to which we belong has always taught, that all men are born in sin. But the heathen are not doomed *en masse*, and just because they are heathen. And this we say lest the opposite be said without question. The good name of some has been aspersed for holding this very theory — that the pagans are lost in the lot, and simply as pagans, and because they are pagans. Indeed it has been hailed as a sign of progress and a proof that he is freeing himself from the bondage of bigotry when a man declares that he does "not believe in the unconditional condemnation of the heathen." But who does believe such a thing? None here, we are sure. Neither any with whose hands and hearts ours are united in the high endeavor to gospelize the ends of the earth. The heathen under "unconditional" sentence of doom; and for no cause in themselves! One wonders where such an idea sprung from at first. Knowing that the Confession of Westminster is closely wrought on the articles of election and eternal destiny, one naturally turns to see if it says such a thing as that the heathen are under an "unconditional" and causeless sentence of judgment. But looking, one finds it not! For very distinctly those venerable divines of Westminster, in composing the Confession, declared that none are under condemnation and dishonor except "for their sins." Whether in Tokio, Timbuctoo, or in this town, there is not a soul from whom God is alienated unless that soul has sinned. His complacence toward his creatures is not according to nationality or color, white, brown, or black, but according to character only. And this is a widely different thing from saying that pagans are under a sentence which we in Christendom are not under by nature. Very obnoxious and revolting would such a thought be to any Christian heart. We could not give it hospitality for an hour. Our God is not such a one as would do so. He is "no respecter of persons." "But in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him!"

Doomed *en masse* and under an exceptional and pitiless judgment! No human being under Heaven had ever such hardship laid upon him. But, it may be asked, has the condition of the heathen not been depicted as if they were all lost until the missionary gets there; and then things turn for the better? Well, so they are all lost until the missionary gets there; in the same sense as

you and I and every one in Europe and America is lost—"is a heathen," as Max Müller affirms—until the word of salvation turns us "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." And therefore we not only do not entertain such a cheerless doctrine of the condition of the heathen; but the fact about it is that, to find those who have an inspiring and working hope for the salvation of the heathen and one that is built upon reasonable beliefs, we must come to those like you, who admit it, sadly enough, that they are lost, but say also that they are still salvable by the grace of God.

I ask the ethnic philosopher what hope he cherishes for a better future for the pagan nations. He despondently points me to the tombs of other heathen nations which are known only in history, whose location is no longer marked on maps, nor is mention made of them in the affairs of men. By and by, says he, these that are as they were, will be where they are; out of sight of all but the antiquarian's eye! I ask the evolutionist of the earthiest school what he forecasts for those lost millions of the old nations for whom the young and strong have small regard. He coldly answers that in the struggle for existence it cannot be expected that such shall survive; because it is only the fittest that are fit to survive. Yet again, I inquire of certain schools of religious thought in Christendom what they expect will become of the myriads who are outcasts in morality and manhood. But so recondite and technical are many of their replies, and they talk so much more of ethical judgments than of the judgments of God and the atonement of Jesus, that I can hardly make out what their real belief is about the better or worse beyond of those who are lying in wickedness. Perhaps if our form of civil government and apparatus for secular education were introduced into pagan lands, with instruction in the humanities, such as Christianity carries along with it, a part of these philanthropists and preachers would feel that nothing more might need to be done. For, as to immortality, and a possibility of blessedness for these moral underlings in an after life, they admit their ignorance; and are not oppressed with any sense of responsibility. Thus it is with some of those of whom I inquire, while with others the pagans are not thought of at all; their sad condition lying so very, very far from the care of such that even distance fails to lend enchantment to the view. But when we turn from all such to those who have

started, established, and at great self-sacrifice have supported Christian missions, how the prospect brightens. Let me ask you what your hope for the pagan's future is. Must they perish, either in this world or in the world to come? By no means, is the encouraging reply. "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon him." Whoever he is, and wherever he lives! The condition of the heathen hopeless! Believe that they are involved in a doom which they cannot escape? Far, and yet further from us be the thought. Through all the ages we think of some of them working righteousness and being "accepted of him." So careful and conservative a historian of Christian doctrine as Dr. Shedd asserts that "it is not the doctrine of the church that the entire mass of pagans have gone down to endless impenitence and death." For "that some of the unevangelized are saved in the present life . . . has been the hope and belief of Christendom." This, he says, "was the hope and belief of the elder Calvinists, as it is of the later." And leading teachers of this "later" school today reject emphatically the imputation that they teach a hopeless hereafter for all the heathen. They invite us to the Scriptures to learn how merciful the Lord is, and how ready he is to forgive, and how prompt to receive the prodigals of the race. At such an invitation we do turn, and rejoice to learn that nearly two thousand years ago the raptured apostle on Patmos beheld in heaven "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindred and peoples and tongues." John saw them in heaven; for they "stood before the Lamb clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." And this innumerable multitude, bear in mind, were neither angels, nor children of Abraham. They were out of every nation under heaven, and of every tribe and tongue, and all of them, uniformed in white robes of righteousness, were eloquently praising the God of salvation. They had been, by his gracious spirit, led to forsake sin, and by patient continuance in well-doing to seek for glory, honor, and immortality. And so they obtained eternal life; and they got it through the blood of the Lamb, whom they knew not, on Mount Calvary, but now stand before on Mount Zion. Do we search the Scriptures to see if

there be good reason to believe that the heathen could, if they would, find their way to the Father's home, although they have not the clear light from the cross? And are we discouraged? Do returned missionaries depict the degradation of the pagan so darkly that there is reason to fear the great majority of them are now forging ahead into darkness, and going down to death forever? And does the appalling thought of such multitudes perishing, threaten to drive sympathetic souls to destraction? Well it might.

The wonder is that any of us can be moderate in our zeal and plans for sending them the proclamation of salvation: seeing that all we hear from them deepens the conviction that, as ages and generations go on, the word of God is true in their case, just as it is here, that "Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse." They do wax worse and worse! The darkness deepens upon them. The dominating "power of Satan" strengthens its grip upon them. The stream of time is sweeping millions out of the one thousand millions of the unevangelized into eternity without God. They have shut their eyes to the light-houses standing on their coasts of life. They disregard the beacons that blaze from every cliff. They recklessly neglect to set their "compass that never varies" by the "stars" that "are shining where there is no sun." And so they are being engulfed in endless woe — not through God's fault, but by their own fault, first and mainly; and by our fault next.

And what is more,

5. So far as we know, the preaching of the law and gospel of God is the only influence that is adequate to the conversion of the heathen who now live on the earth with us. And it is only with these that we are concerned. No attentive reader forgets the sharp rebuke which Jesus gave to one who sought to get excused from duty to the living by asking leave of absence to go and bury the dead. "Let the dead bury the dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." And so we have to do with living heathen in their present miserable plight! Whether their ancestors were better or worse than they are; whether their predecessors were less under "the power of Satan" than they are; and whether, if they were less entirely blinded by the god of this world, many of them were saved, it is all idle to inquire. A pagan emperor fooling with his fiddle while his capitol

is in flames is not guilty of such criminal folly as the Christian church will be if she entertains herself with debates about the dead, while before her face and eyes myriads of souls are sinking into the bottomless pit. We have the living heathen — a thousand million of them living with us now in this world. And as neither the progress of modern civilization, nor the presence of the secular knowledges which that civilization has introduced among the outcast and lost, has ever transformed the moral character of any pagan people or tribe, therefore we are left to choose whether we will make haste to give them the gospel, or whether we will let them die in their sins. At what awful peril of their eternal welfare do we spend one cent or second inquiring whether they may be saved in some other way. Can words state or eternity calculate our responsibility if, without clear warrant from the Word of God, we wilfully do anything to minify the importance of proclaiming both the warnings and the wooing invitations of the gospel to those that are ready to perish? The very fact that those who have been among them give such unvarying testimony to their hardness of heart and enmity against God, should be enough to enlist the last energy in us to bring to bear upon them the holy light and love of the Lamb of God! But for that love we ourselves should most probably never have turned from sin. Then what have we to do with speculative theories, or possible methods of salvation for them? We have had our own eyes opened by a saving light, which we are bidden to let shine! How can we then waste that light in illuminating a debating room, where we may discuss theodicies and theologies, the while that "gross darkness" every day deepens upon the perishing millions? Were we not, perhaps, too sure that the forbearance of Christ is of very godlike endurance, we should feel like asking every eloquent angel before him to beg an excuse for the waste of time and the trifling with opportunity of which we already stand guilty.

No difference what men might do without the gospel, if only they would do their best. Yet it does still remain that the unevangelized of our day and generation appear blind, beyond seeing anything, and in bondage to sin and Satan below the power of anything to extricate them, unless it shall be the attractions of the cross! But with the gospel faithfully and effectually preached the encouraging fact is:

The Gentiles are turning "from Satan unto God." It may,

in one view, seem a long time since the Moravian and English missionaries, with our own, starting a little later, struck the first light in the dense darkness of South Africa and India. But what has been one century of our giving them and others everywhere over the earth the light, compared with the dismal and degraded centuries which preceded? And what have we yet done, seeing that, if every soul in China were suddenly to confess Christ, each Christian missionary in that empire now would have six hundred thousand members in his church? All the same, the workmen on the mission fields are receiving such wages for their work as preachers of the gospel at home might well rejoice over if they had even the half of it. As fruit and effect of the kind of men and the manner of gospelizing in the past in the dark lands, we now see the average missionary winning twenty four times more souls to Christ in a year than does the average Protestant minister of the gospel in Europe and America. Never as now the words of the Master apply for our encouragement: "Lift up your eyes and behold the fields, that they are white to the harvest." When the earthquake shook open the doors, shivered the shackles and quenched the lights in the Philippian jail, the agitated keeper "called for a light" that he might see just what the ruins around him were. Something mightier than an earthquake, but not noisy, has shaken the nations and agitated the people. If not all, then many of them. And this many are calling "for a light." How can we be careless or cold-hearted in carrying them the light we have, now that theirs have gone out? There are among those masses a vast number who have not, as the foolish virgins, slept until the cry of the coming bridegroom awakened them. They are stirred already; and are asking us for oil and for lamps too — because their old idolatries are fast going out in universal darkness and doubt.

Right Conceptions of the Kingdom of God and their Motive Value.

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD AT

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BY

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SERMON.

"THY KINGDOM COME." — *Luke xi: 2.*

A DISTINGUISHED living author has said: "The sublime idea of the conversion of the world to Christ has become so common as to cease to awaken wonder." This is a great victory, and one which indicates a remarkable advance of the truth. But is there not ground for fear lest the familiarity of the notion which has conquered the sense of wonder has also taken somewhat both from the commanding dignity of the conception and from the intensity of the purpose which contemplates the bringing of all men into subjection to the Son of God, so that what has been gained in one direction has been partially lost in another?

Having no small share in this apprehension, it has seemed to me worth while to devote the sacred hour allotted by custom to the service in which we are now engaged to a brief examination and re-statement, in simple terms, with a view especially to ascertaining what ought to be their influence over our own thought and action, of some of the leading facts and principles which dominate in the new and better order of things God is seeking to establish for humanity, and which must be kept steadily in mind in trying to secure the realization of the prayer our Lord has put into the mouths of His disciples. While, therefore, the few brief words now under review open out in many promising ways, and invite into many paths of fertile and profitable reflection, the theme which has been fixed upon for the present occasion is:

RIGHT CONCEPTIONS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THEIR MOTIVE VALUE.

Entering without further delay, but with a profound sense of responsibility, upon the grave task thus assumed, it is to be noted:

I. FIRST OF ALL, THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS A DIVINE KINGDOM — DIVINE IN ITS ORIGIN, DIVINE IN ITS LAWS AND METHODS, AND DIVINE IN ITS AIMS.

So much, of course, lies on the face of the statement, and it seems at first flush a needless repetition to affirm that God's Kingdom came from God, and belongs to God, and in the whole scope and structure and intent of it bears unmistakable impress of a source in the quickening inspiration of God.

But the simple fact is, the human element has played such a part in the progress of the kingdom hitherto, and must continue to play such a part in the centuries to come, that we cannot be at too much pains to make the idea clear that this kingdom is not, in any feature or purpose of it, of human origination. It was not, like the Iliad, or the Parthenon, or the steam engine, a product of the genius of man. The inception of it came down from God out of heaven. It was imported into the world from the luminous realms of the skies. It was breathed by the Holy Spirit into the thought of mankind. Back in the Garden of Eden in the first promise to the first offenders against the law under which their lives were cast, the Kingdom of God was foreshadowed. The prophecy of it was continued, and the hope and rudimentary form of it were kept alive till Jesus came. But the idea of it was always something borne in on men, and not a suggestion or an outgrowth of their own minds. By patient study or sudden flashes of illumination, or combined and protracted efforts, men have wrought out many helpful devices — some of them so marvelous and beneficent that admiration never ceases; but not after this method did the matchless conception of the Kingdom of God come to be the aspiration and the possession of human hearts. Men have discovered and invented many things, and the world is full of evidences of what can be accomplished when thought swells with eager determination to wrest some secret from reluctant nature, or to force some unsubjugated element of the physical spheres to bow and pay tribute to the prosperity and happiness of society; but no man and no body of men can take the credit of having discovered or invented the Kingdom of God. The idea of it was a revelation to men. Only as men were divinely inspired could they apprehend the Kingdom of God. Only as they were divinely commissioned would they have felt at liberty to proclaim the Kingdom of God.

Eminent scholars do not hesitate to say that the idea of the

Kingdom of God, in the form in which it has come to be domesticated in our Christianity, has no place in any ancient poem, in any ancient system of ethics or philosophy, in any ancient creation of literature, nor in any ancient religion outside the religion of the Bible. It has no place in these productions, because it had no place in the minds of the authors of these productions. Not by the will of man. The idea of the Kingdom of God was simply out of the reach of the unaided human intellect. The culture of the schools in their rarest results did not lead up to this idea. The heathen world, thoughtful, brilliant, restless, audacious, successful, too, in many departments and along many lines of achievement, was yet unequal to the task of formulating such a scheme, or even of advancing to the conception of such a scheme, as the Kingdom of God, and so, wanting in the life-giving and life-sustaining principles of the kingdom, the heathen world fell back from the heights it had gained into decay and night.

Against all the assaults of skepticism the Kingdom of God has held its own as divine. The development of it has been according to moral energies supplied from on high. Its victories stamp it as God's and not man's. To the end it will be ours to say, "*Thy* Kingdom come." "*Thine* is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory."

II. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS A UNIT.

There are many believers, sincere and earnest; there are many churches, true and fruitful branches of the Living Vine; there are many organizations whose aims take them forward in a line of helpful and holy activity; there are many hearts which have been redeemed and purified by the blood of Christ, and which beat in sympathy with the aspirations kindled by the Spirit; but there is only one Kingdom of God.

Incidentally it may be remarked that the Kingdom of God is a unit as including all who have remained true to God, or who, having sinned, have come back into fidelity to Him through faith and love, whether in this world or in the worlds beyond and unseen. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every family," or fatherhood, "in heaven and on earth is named." His gracious sovereignty sways to itself all right intelligences, in whatever sphere and in whatever realm. The saint on earth and the saint in heaven strike hands in a common

loyalty and rejoice in a common fellowship. Each is moved by the same impulse; each owes allegiance to the same law; each has share in the same love, and looks forward to an experience in glory, whatever the hights already reached, which shall be endless and increasingly blessed. In heaven and on earth the children of the kingdom make one music and move forward under one banner. In the Father's house there are many places of sojourn, but it is one House. The kingdom has its different out-lying districts—how many of them, how near, how remote, no man is permitted to know; it has its different forms of activity and service and satisfaction—some impossible to be conjectured till this mortal shall have put on immortality and we see no longer through a glass darkly; but it is one kingdom, universal, everlasting, in its life, in its beckoning prospects, in its unfolding joys, and in its crowning rewards, worthy of its King Eternal.

But the point to be particularly accented is, that the Kingdom of God is a unit in the sense that it includes within its scope all true believers here on earth, of whatever land, or race, or class, or condition, and that the interests of the kingdom far and near, at home and abroad, are identical. "There is one body, and one spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." "So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another." "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female, for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus." "Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman, but Christ is all and in all." "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jew or Greek, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit." Paul never wearied in his iteration of this large and precious truth. He never failed to use it, as often as he had occasion, to smite conceit, and prejudice, and every selfish pretense into the dust. That this unity of the kingdom as God apprehended it might be apprehended and made real by His disciples, was the prayer of our Lord: "Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are." "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also

may be in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me." All distinctions of race and color and worldly standing were lost in His thought; for to be a disciple, no matter how humble, was to be a citizen of the common kingdom. This is an idea fundamental to Christianity. To be saved by the power of Christ is to be translated out of one kingdom into another, out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, out of the kingdom of evil into the Kingdom of God.

There are degrees in experience and attainment and usefulness, but in the fundamental matter of relation to God all who are in the kingdom at all stand on a common plane, and are the heirs of a common blessedness. "So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

This unity of the kingdom exists and holds its own notwithstanding the feeble expression it seems to have in outward form, and in the face even of the differences and divergences and oppositions which often prevail to an alarming extent amongst those who are unquestionably true disciples of Christ. Men may be in the kingdom without knowing each other. Indeed, so blind are men, so narrow, so full of prejudices, so imperfect in many particulars, that they may be in the kingdom though unwilling to know each other. This is not the spirit of the kingdom, but the spirit of the kingdom does not come into regnancy in souls and over souls all at once. The unity of the kingdom is not destroyed because, forsooth, all the members of the kingdom are not able to see eye to eye. Unity is consistent with difference. If uniformity were a condition or necessity of unity, then anything like a genuine oneness would be out of the question, and something more than a change of heart would be required before the petition of our Lord could be fulfilled in such a sacred intimacy of believers as subsists between the Son and the Father. The unity of the kingdom is not the unity of a mosaic, but of a living, fruit-bearing tree.

On the other hand, is it not going too far to insist that there can be no real unity without diversity, and that the limits of diversity must be pushed outward until they include all sorts of latitudinarianism? In our ideas and estimates of the kingdom we ought to be as catholic as was the Great Teacher, and as were those after the Great Teacher, who were inspired of God to be the instructors of the ages, and—no more.

God knows His own, and His own are the children of the

kingdom, and they are held by bonds invisible in one sacred fellowship. As human nature is, and even as sanctified human nature is in its present experiences, and in its present stages of development, it is doubtless better, in the interest of unity, for men to maintain separate but not hostile organizations, and to worship through varied forms, and to work by different methods and instrumentalities; but the divine thought of unity is not to be trifled with nor belittled; and it is the duty of all who know and love the Lord to set their hearts and their faces and their lives toward the realization, just as far as possible in outward form, of that which actually exists in God's sight, and which was the burden of the supplication of Jesus in the Upper Chamber.

This unity of the kingdom is the ideal and prophecy of the unity of humanity. If humanity ever comes into the realization of anything like a vital unity, it will be through the voluntary surrender of individual souls in numbers so large as to control society to the laws of the Kingdom of God. One of the obstacles to the apprehension and establishment of the kingdom as Christ announced it, was the total absence from the ideas and systems of men of any sense of kinship so wide as to embrace all tribes and nations and tongues. It was a strange doctrine the Apostle preached when he stood in the midst of the Areopagus, face to face with the culture and achievement and exclusiveness of the old classic world, and declared that God had "made of one every nation of men." A great writer, in speaking of the religious conceptions which were dominant at the moment when Roman power had touched the point of culmination, and of the difficulties in the way of seeing how a single organization of any sort could be made to include all true believers, uses this language: "The thought of a religion not national, but for all races, would have recoiled from the rocky masses of the unbroken nationalities of an earlier age." He says further that the Old World encountered a limitation beyond which it could not pass, in that it "lacked the thought of humanity; and, since it knew not the whole, it could not rightly appreciate the parts." It was one of the functions of the universality of the Roman Empire to familiarize the minds of men with a notion so broad, and in this way to help them over into the conception of a kingdom whose boundaries were to be as wide as the outermost reaches of humanity, and whose realms were to be peopled from all the nations. Having derived this kind of aid in securing a lodgment in men's minds from the out-

ward unity imposed upon the political world by ambitious rulers, there has been a reciprocal service of inestimable value already rendered to the nations by this conception of the unity of the Kingdom of God, through which they have been kept in such measure of harmony and fellowship as they have enjoyed. For, as this same writer well adds: "That which today holds cultivated nations in unity, notwithstanding all their diversity, is their common Christianity." The nations, even the best of them, are far enough from being what they ought to be; they are selfish, jealous, aggressive, but the idea and laws and forces of the Kingdom of God have changed them immensely for the better.

III. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS A KINGDOM IN WHICH RIGHTEOUSNESS IS MAGNIFIED AND MADE THE STANDARD AND AIM OF LIFE.

This is the order: first, the heart touched and purified by divine influences, and then the life brought over into a heavenly spirit and made conformable to the will of God. The Kingdom of God has only to come and have its way and sway everywhere in order to fill the earth with purity and justice and helpful love. The Kingdom of God, established in its ideal form and fullness, is the realization of the highest possibilities of which man in his social relationships is capable. When the Kingdom of God shall have come in its round and ripe completeness, light will be universally diffused, and the royal law will be the rule of conduct, and hearts and hands will be clean, and homes will be sweet, and the conduct of all affairs, buying and selling, building houses and roads and ships, making laws, administering governments, will be in a temper of strictest integrity, and society in all its ends and movements will be a reflection of the disposition of Him whose purity is absolute and whose goodness is inexhaustible. The will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Legislation, institutions, customs, literature, art, social intercourse, industrial and business policies, relations of classes and nationalities and races, will all be informed with a new celestial spirit. There will be no color lines, and no claims of superior stock and ancient pedigree, and no assumptions of caste, and no narrow, contemptible jealousies of Occident and Orient, to excite prejudice and stir to Sand-Lot orator assaults in California, or to Glenn-Bill assaults in Georgia, or to wild mob outbreaks and cruel massacres in India, or Egypt, or China, or Tur-

key. There will be no burnining question of capital and labor; and no wide yawning gulf between high and low, rich and poor. Crœsus will be a man among men, human, helpful; and Lazarus will have a tenderer ministry than dogs to lick his sores. The fruits of the Spirit, no longer overshadowed and choked by the rank growths of the flesh, will mature, and peace and good will will prevail among men.

This is not a dream — a mere poetic fancy created out of the romantic and gilded conceits of men who have allowed their imaginations to roam unlicensed, and to paint the future with pictures suited to the genial impulse or the whim of the moment. This is what the Kingdom of God implies and anticipates. It is what we look forward to when we work for the consummation of the kingdom — the filling of the earth with righteousness.

The Kingdom of God is to accomplish this, or rather the Kingdom of God is to get itself set up in the world, and advance to its true regnancy in human hearts and over human affairs, by working from within, outward. While the manifestation will be in the forms of material amelioration, and better social order, and life sublimed into harmony with right reason — because into loyalty to God — the propulsive energy of it all is spiritual. It is not a kingdom of outward forms and forces, but of inward. Like a tree, the blossom and fruit are on the outside, but the fructifying principle is within, hidden away from human eyes. Attempt to get the fruit by any other process than this by which it is unfolded through the working of the unseen vitalities of the tree itself, and there will be no fruit. Never can the Kingdom of God come from any external pressure or constraint. Some conditions are very much more favorable to moral and spiritual progress than others. History is full of instances in which tyranny and oppression have hindered the triumphs of the truth. Ecclesiastical cunning and hate baffle Protestantism in Austria and Russia today. But conventional conformities are not the kingdom come. No edicts of rulers, and no decrees and statutes of legislatures can make men righteous. The Kingdom of God is within. It must be within before it can be in any worthy sense outward and real.

This is a hard fact to realize. Our Lord Himself had to emphasize it continually. There was a tendency in thought to confound the Kingdom of God with earthly sovereignties; and there was a tendency in action to subordinate the Kingdom of God to the ambitious schemes of earthly sovereignties. This was the

notion of the Pharisees to whom Jesus addressed His answer in reply to their question as to when the kingdom should come: "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo, here! or there! for lo, the Kingdom of God is within you." After Jesus, Paul laid stress on the same fact. "The Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

The Kingdom of God rests on the hearts of men. It appeals to the hearts of men, and it conquers by conquering the hearts of men. It approaches peoples and nations who know not God, not with arms and streaming banners, but with the truth. It brings souls into subjection not by force, but by love and reason. When it has won its conquests, it does not seek to maintain them by the power of the sword, but by the sublime might of the verities of God. It creates no earthly thrones. It awes by no majesty of earthly dominion. The dazzling splendor of earthly hierarchies, the cunning intrigues of diplomatists, the mad endeavors of wild and fanatical crusaders, have no place in the aggressive economy of the Kingdom of God. All these are of the world. The Kingdom of God deals with mind, with will, with conscience. It moves forward and registers victories by bringing individuals under the power of the Spirit and into harmony with the law of God. It is in the heart that evil has its stronghold. The heart is the hot-bed in which grow the vices of adultery and theft and lying and murder, and every black and festering sin. Do whatever else we may to better the condition of mankind, and to improve society and to advance civilization, it is all of no avail unless there be an inward cleansing. Change a man inwardly, change a man as he fronts God, change the indifference and the hate and the oppugnancy which are in a man into love, change his disloyalty into loyalty, and all the rest will follow. The scepter of the kingdom is a right scepter.

Hence the Kingdom of God is something intensely real. It is real because it involves opposition to all iniquity and darkness. Against every vice and crime known to the courts, against every evil disposition and tendency, against every iniquity which admits of remedy, against every habit and custom and code which obstructs the inflow of light and takes souls downward toward the pit, against every needless burden, and every disability, and every wrong under which humanity groans, the Kingdom of God is and must be a living and uncompromising protest.

IV. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS TO BE REALIZED THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF JESUS CHRIST.

Christ is the seal of the divineness of the kingdom. He is the bond of the unity of the kingdom. He is the source and power of the righteousness of the kingdom. He is the open door and sublime attraction of the kingdom. "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one cometh unto the Father but by Me."

Here it will do no harm to say over again, perhaps, what has been said incidentally a number of times already, and is implied in this whole discussion, that the Kingdom of God stands as the equivalent of the ideal condition of humanity, and that the Kingdom of God realized is the best possible condition humanity can reach. But there are men who stoutly claim that Christianity stands in the way of any large progress of the race, and that while there are good things inherent in the system, as there are in all the Great Religions, the world has outgrown the faith of the simple Nazarene, and we must look to other agencies and principles and methods to carry mankind much farther onward.

Men say: "Give us profound philosophies; give us learning widely diffused; give us music for the masses; give us art in cheap, instructive form; give us science with lessons of wisdom garnered out of all the departments of creation, and with applications to all the varied uses of daily life; give us anatomies and physiologies that we may know how wonderfully we are made, and on what conditions life may be kept at its best and prolonged; give us equitable social economies; give us the opportunity and the protection which liberal and just laws will afford; give us reform in individuals and homes and states; give us institutions which will encourage virtue, and foster manhood, and build everything up on a basis of intelligence and equity and purity; and then there will be progress for the world." "Give us these things," men continue, "and the Golden Age of which poets have sung will glide softly in, and bent forms will straighten up, and moistened cheeks will become dry, and aching hearts will swell with joy, and the old earth, dismal with the groans of a smitten and burdened humanity, will resound with the notes of ecstatic triumph. There will be natural and rational living then, and concord and happiness everywhere."

This is what men say: "Give us these things." But when

men say, in terms of such simple, easy assurance: "Give us these things," to whom do they speak? What powers do they invoke? Is it anything more, after all, than a pretty little soliloquy?

Beyond any question these are all fine things. Great good would surely come to all human kind if the suggestions here made could only be adopted, and the principles here announced could be set forward into control in affairs. This is not the location of the dispute. Only give them to us! Only put them in motion! Who is to do it? Who is to rise up and render this high service? Will Genius? Genius has had its unobstructed opportunity in the past. Will Culture? Greece had culture, and Rome had culture, and we all know what came of it even in the most cultivated circles of those renowned nations. Will Wealth? Will Power? For the most part, Wealth and Power have sought their own. The case admits of far stronger statement. Without a living Christ, and the principles and motive forces supplied from a vital and aggressive Christianity, the very agencies and instrumentalities on which men lay such stress for the perfecting of the condition of humanity, fall speedily away into inefficiency. Art, science, philosophy, social economies, reformatory agencies, educational institutions, governments as free and equal as it is possible to make, right balancings of work and pay, all come to naught unless informed in their life and purpose from the life and purpose of the Son of God.

Every little while somebody comes forward — oftener than otherwise self-announced — who has discovered a new way for the world out of the wilderness of darkness and misery and guilt into which it has somehow been plunged. How often the partisans of these new schemes are heard shouting their "Eurekas" to each other. But no, the torches which are to make the world luminous, not with a fitful glare, but with the permanent splendor of a fresh morning, must be kindled in the white light of the radiance which falls in on mankind from the face of God. Any throb of real divine life which any man gets into his soul will come from bringing his heart close up to the divine heart of Him who came to be a source and motive of new creation to all who were dead in trespasses and sins. It is through this process, also, that society may hope to be informed and reformed; reformed because informed with the living truth of the living Christ.

It is sometimes affirmed, strangely enough in the face of history, that there is a native tendency in mankind which necessi-

tates advancement. Those holding this view have much to say about civilization and progress. But, as ex-President Woolsey, of Yale College, has said: "Civilization and progress are words of jugglery. They are general terms of no meaning except as including the motive forces which lead man on to the standard of perfect manhood. These forces are religion, morals, social life, government, art, and science. The chief of these motive forces is religion. How is the world to get along without these any more than the most nicely furnished locomotive can leave its place or can go on safely, without steam or a road? Would it not be as absurd to say that civilization consists in that advancement of society which will supersede the necessity of religion? Until civilization can create some new kind of force to perfect mankind, it must depend in no small degree for its perfection and spread on the moral forces called into being by the Gospel."

The thing to do now, therefore, is precisely what it has been for eighteen hundred years, and what it will continue to be until the nations have been given to their gracious Sovereign for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession: it is to fall back upon the example of the great Apostle and work in the spirit, and with the truth, and for the ends illustrated in his career.

In making a study of the writings and methods of Paul, with a view to ascertaining what lesson he has to teach in this great matter of bringing the world back into allegiance to God, one is struck — or if one is not struck it can only be because he has carried preconceived and biasing notions into the investigation — with these two very significant facts:

(1) The unhesitating and uniform and persistent stress laid by him on the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. It would seem impossible to over-state the importance he ascribed to the blood of the Son of God. God's love commended to us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us; reconciled to God when as yet we were enemies through the death of His Son; justified by or in His blood, are phrases gathered out of a single passage, in which he is showing how guilty men come to have standing in righteousness. From the hour when, nigh unto Damascus, beams of whelming light flashed in upon his soul, and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? until that other hour, when close down to the outer bound of his earthly career, the time of his departure had

come, and he could sit — imprisoned — and triumphantly write of the good fight he had fought, and of the course he had finished, and of the faith he had kept, and of the crown of righteousness which was laid up for him, Christ Crucified never ceased to be to him the over-mastering thought of all he knew of the revelation of God to a guilty world. According to his conception, Calvary was at once the supreme necessity and the culminating event in the scheme of human redemption. In mind and heart he magnified the Cross.

(2) The second significant fact is the way in which he brought the Crucified Christ forward on all opportunities, and in all exigencies, and used Him as the one quickening and propulsive truth through which he was to accomplish his ends.

It is to be borne in mind that the sublime and all-comprehending object Paul had in view after he became loyal to Jesus, was the advancement of this Kingdom of God. In this sense he was "a man of one idea." This thought possessed his entire being and filled the whole horizon of his vision.

But the high business as he conducted it fell into three subdivisions: *first*, setting men's faces toward God, or starting them in the way of a right life; *second*, building men up in holy character, or in character after the pattern of the Divine Man; *third*, guarding men against the subtle powers of temptation, or correcting the erroneous opinions into which they might be betrayed by their own reflections or by the cunning sophistries of the enemies of the truth. Follow the course of this master mind of the ages through from Damascus to Rome, observing what he did, listening to what he said, and it will be found that one or the other of these resplendent services was what occupied him always. This was his one way of advancing the Kingdom of God and filling the earth with righteousness — getting men into right relations with God, getting men to growing in grace and knowledge, getting men free from all entanglements of evil and error.

But the instrumentality employed, the truth to which he trusted for working the transformation desired in the hearts and lives of men, and in society, was just this — the Crucified Christ. To the Corinthians he wrote: "For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him Crucified." What he meant was that he had no confidence in Hebrew traditions and rituals, nor in Greek culture, nor in any drift of nature, nor in any scheme of human legislation, nor in any other humanly devised plan for working out the highest well-being of

men, but staked all on the simple story of the Uplifted Christ. The question was how to do most good, how to save men, how to save society, how to get humanity into the apprehension and life of God, and into the consciousness of the possibilities of light and strength and joy within reach; and Paul said it was by holding forth the Word, or pressing upon the attention of men the story of the Crucified Christ. This was the large and precious and all-comprehending truth he used from beginning to end. It was with this truth he won his victories for individual souls and for society at large.

This is the effective truth still, and the open way into all highest spiritual and moral triumphs. If we are to help the world forward — to help so that human life shall be a better thing, and worthier the expenditures which have gone into it, and the height to which it may rise — it must be through Christ. It is the truth and the life and the spirit of the crucified but risen Lord which we shall find full of all potency for good. There are many incidental agencies of value, but nothing to be named with the Crucified Christ. If the kingdom ever comes on earth, it will be through the knowledge and acknowledgment of the Crucified Christ.

These, then, are some of what seem to me to be right conceptions of the Kingdom of God. Turning these conceptions over one by one, and looking at them at a somewhat different angle, we find in them a large measure of motive value in the form of encouragement in our endeavors to carry the light of the Gospel everywhere, and of guidance in the choice of specific ends and methods, and of inspiration to do our best.

1. *To begin with, in the divineness of the kingdom there is certified to us the coöperation of God, in a peculiar and eminent sense, in all our efforts to build up and establish the kingdom.*

As has been said, this kingdom is God's. It had its origin in the wisdom and love of God. It was set up in the world, and it has been carried forward to its present stage of development through the grace of God.

When we take an interest in the kingdom and seek to promote it by counsel, by prayer, by gift, by any sort of wise and sincere service, we come right into line with the divine thought, and thus put ourselves in an attitude to secure the favor and help of God, and to make sure of final victory. Men who are

occupied with this high concern of the kingdom, and who are devoting strength and thought and time and substance to its welfare and progress, are not like those who are busy in efforts to introduce a new system of philosophy or metaphysics, or to popularize a new school of poetry, or to secure a patent on some new invention, or to change the platform and policy of a party, or to launch successfully a great material enterprise; but they are working for something which is known to be peculiarly dear to the heart of God, and which has on it the stamp of the special approval of God.

This is at once a marvelous and a blessed thing — to be in line with God, moving forward in concert with the purposes of God, working with God's truth and by methods and in a temper suggested by the Spirit of God, and spending and being spent for ends which are precious in the estimation of God! What is there like it?

It need not be doubted for a moment that all truth wherever lodged, and all good aims and objects, are sacred in the thought of God. It need not be doubted for a moment that God sympathizes with all truth in its struggles for expression and recognition; that every right word and deed pleases Him, and that His providence, in the long run, is on the side of every noble endeavor to set men right, and to put a better face on affairs in general.

But there is a unique sense in which the coöperation of God is pledged to all efforts which have in view the interests and the triumphs of the kingdom.

The Scriptures are all aglow with prophecies which imply the presence of God amongst His people and the working of God in and through and with all who believe in His name to fill the world with knowledge, and to bring the nations into loving subjection to their true Sovereign. They are in the Old Testament and they are in the New Testament — these prophecies — shining like unquenchable stars in the heavens.

There are other assurances besides those contained in formal prophecies, positive and unequivocal, to the same effect. Are we not told that "we are laborers together with God"? One of the most touching appeals of the Apostle begins with these words: "We, then, as laborers together with God." It is for this reason that things weak and foolish in the narrow judgment of men are able to confound the wise, and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are. God is behind them and in

them, and they look forward to an issue which has on it the benediction of God. Nothing seems more improbable from the view-point of human calculation than that some results which are illustrious in history should have come from the measurable, observable efforts which were put forth to secure them. It is the same explanation — God was present, coöperant.

It is said that a little seed which can be borne in the beak of a bird, dropped into a crevice of the Alps, sometimes germinates, and gathering a hidden force from air and sunshine, works away with its mysterious leverage of swelling vitality until it can rend mountain rocks asunder, and hurl them thundering down into the deep and inaccessible caverns below. It is a small thing, this bit of a seed, to bring about so much. How does it do it? It does it by just getting into line with nature. It has the omnipotent energy of nature behind to help it. At its noiseless invocation everlasting principles come to its aid, and, at the decisive moment, the great and universal law of gravitation stands ready to lend a weight that is irresistible. If God be for us, who can be against us? If God work with us, who can hinder the success of our efforts?

What other institutions and organizations shall survive the wrestlings of our own and of after times no man can tell; but this kingdom for whose coming we are taught to pray, and for whose coming we work, is one which cannot be moved. It is a kingdom of which there shall be no end and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. He who has wrought on through the mighty centuries in aid of those who have been doing their best to help forward the kingdom, guarding their lives or sanctifying their deaths, girding them with strength, supplying them with wisdom and grace, and who at the same time has been bringing science, art, discovery, inventions, material achievements, wealth, learning, wars, conflicts, revolutions, into subserviency to the one common end of the kingdom, will stand by the promise made through the lips of the Risen Lord, "Lo, I am with you alway."

2. *This conception of the Kingdom of God in its unity emphasizes the sentiment and the obligation of brotherhood in Christ and of fellowship in work.*

It makes it easy, or if not easy, imperative, to stand on a platform of equality — man with man; no man, in a spirit of mere pride or conceit or disdain, exalting himself above any other

man. It lifts one out of the atmosphere of personal prejudice and localism which always circumscribes and blinds, and takes him forward into large comprehensive views of things, and a temper of catholicity. It warms the heart and sets currents of sympathy in motion, and with one who feels that he is really in the kingdom, alive with its life, and intent on the things which belong to the kingdom, it soon comes to be a kind of second nature to be very tender to the weak and erring and alienated, and helpful up to the highest measure of helpfulness wherever a stroke can be made to tell for God and humanity.

There are two difficulties in the way of a hearty and enthusiastic fellowship in the work of the kingdom.

One is a disposition to estimate men, not according to the standard of value which holds under the laws of the kingdom, but according to the standards of the world, political standards, commercial standards, social standards, æsthetic standards, manufacturers' standards; which make them worth just what can be got out of them, and not what can be put into them. That uncovers a sharp difference. That is one of the points of difference between the world's way and God's way of looking at men. The world says: "How can this man be used?" "What sort of service is it possible for him to render?" God says: "What can be made of this man?" "Into what magnificent proportions can he be builded?" It is something to mourn over, the fatal facility with which not a few will manage to over-ride all theories and all requirements of brotherhood, and side with the world and against God in this matter of forming opinions and drawing conclusions concerning men, and in the treatment to be accorded to men. This severs the bond of mutual confidence and stops the interflow of mutual sympathy; and hands which ought to be and which otherwise would be joined, are not locked in fellowship of service. In how many churches, in how many bodies of believers, there is no practical appreciation and sense of oneness, of oneness each with all because of a oneness each with Christ! Judgments are arrived at and actions determined, not after divine, but after worldly standards.

The other difficulty is a tendency, or perhaps we might better say a habit, in large numbers, to limit the interest they permit themselves to feel in the affairs and on-goings of the kingdom to boundaries prescribed by their own convenience or inclination or taste. How often, even at this day, men are heard protesting against plans and expenditures which contemplate

carrying the Gospel to all peoples and tribes, and winning all nations to the faith of Christ. Not unfrequently the view is very narrow, and men are found with vision so short that they cannot see over the rim of their own commonwealth or city, if indeed they have sight of anything beyond the thresholds of their own homes. To say nothing of the dishonor put upon the express commands of our Lord, these attitudes minimize and dwarf the whole business of the Kingdom of God. Things are seen not in their totality, not in their all-comprehensiveness, but in a broken, fragmentary way. Fellowship with God in His love for a lost world, and with the Son of God in His sufferings and death for the restoration of a lost world to righteousness and peace, dwindles away, or fails to develop into anything save a poor, sickly apology for fellowship. The high aims and obligations of Christianity are caricatured.

But when one opens his mind to the apprehension of the kingdom in its unity; a unity running back into and resting on the idea of a common Fatherhood in God, and a common humanity, and a redemption common to all who will accept it on the terms on which it is offered in the Gospel, and a blessedness in the world to come common to all who secure right through faith in the Slain Lamb to enter in by the gates into the city, then men — all men everywhere — grow large and sacred, and any sort of genuine service, if only it be genuine, no matter where, no matter by whom, becomes something exceedingly precious. The kingdom in this conception of its unity, once fairly domesticated in the soul, broadens thought, broadens interest, broadens sympathy, broadens the whole man; and geographical lines, and national lines, and race lines, give way to the higher demands of spiritual affiliation. How strange and incongruous to stand in the presence of this august idea, which gathers into itself so many other august ideas, and ask whether this man or that man, whether this race or that race, is worth saving! How out of keeping with the whole spirit of this unity are efforts to antagonize the different branches and departments of the work of building up the kingdom, and especially of efforts to carry forward one branch or department at the expense of another. It is all one, and it is all for God and His glory.

It is along this line — the line of united and consecrated effort to build up the Kingdom of God in the earth — that believers will come into a fellowship which will be at once signifi-

cant and impressive. Of late we have heard not a little about a great Metropolitan Cathedral, to be erected at a cost of many millions, by contributions from all the Protestant denominations, and to stand as a symbol of Protestant unity. Missionaries and missionary churches in Japan — Presbyterian, Reformed, Congregational — laying aside their denominational peculiarities, and working in harmony for the common end of subjugating the Empire to Christ, is a better symbol of Protestant unity.

3. *Inasmuch as righteousness is magnified in the Kingdom of God, and made the standard and aim of life, the ultimate object of all our labors in behalf of men, and communities of men, will be character, character developed and carried on into ideal completeness.*

We call it loyalty to God; we call it conformity to the divine will; we call it likeness to Christ; we call it the attainment of holiness; but it is all epitomized in the statement that it is character, or the reaching of the moral and spiritual condition which was contemplated in the creation of man in the image of God.

Not at first shall we get this. The first thing is to turn men towards God by getting them into the faith and fellowship of the Son of God; setting them in the way and bringing them under the conditions in which there can be a realization of character. But character, such as God approves, is to be the shining goal of all the running; the final fruitage of all the sowing and toil. How clear the Apostle's perceptions, and how intense his convictions on this point! According to his apprehension, what a wealth of instruction and influence there is in the church concentrated on this lofty outcome in character: "for the perfecting of the saints — till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error, but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him, which is the head, even Christ." It is not enough simply to be a babe in Christ; it is not enough simply to be converted and to have initial experiences, even though full of joy, of the love and grace of God; step by step, and stage by stage, one is to press on and to be pressed on into sweet and full and symmetrical and robust character. Not for heaven alone

is it, though that in itself were a motive to tax the strength and stir the enthusiasm of all earnest souls to the utmost, that the recruiting and educating in the name of the Lord go on, but that the kingdom here on earth may have fit citizens, and the lands be peopled and controlled by godly men and women.

This is a suggestion which has pertinency in connection with all forms and departments of aggressive Christian activity. In the Home field and in the Foreign field alike it must be the aim to develop a type of manhood which shall compel admiration in virtue of its purity and breadth and nobleness and resolute vigor. In one sense it is the glory of Christianity and certainly a high proof of its divineness, that it is condescending, compassionate, tender, full of encouragement to the weak and wayward, full of comfort for the distressed and disappointed and sorrowing; but there is a requirement beyond this; and unless Christianity here at home makes better character than atheism and infidelity, makes better character than rationalism, makes better character than science and socialism can turn out — character with more integrity, and more pluck, and more moral grandeur in it; and unless Christianity abroad can make better character — in every way finer and stronger and more trustworthy than Mohammedanism, Buddhism, or Confucianism, or any other pagan religion can make, then, not only will the true aim and the highest function of Christianity be missed, but a great many people will be set upon asking what is the superior merit of this system, and why these unwearied efforts and expenditures to press it upon the acceptance of all mankind?

There is no doubt in any of our minds as to what Christianity will do for a man or a nation when permitted to work out its legitimate results. This has had centuries of demonstration. There is no doubt, either, that large numbers of devout and earnest souls, wherever there are such souls, are working wisely and steadily towards the high achievement of right character. But it is a question whether the time has not come, whether the interests of the kingdom do not demand that there shall be a new and universal stress laid upon character as the rare and commanding issue of all efforts by Christian workers in whatever sphere, or department, or section of the globe.

It is impossible, in the circumstances in which we are here gathered, not to think of one, large-souled, venerable, beloved by all who knew him, and gone but recently, at the end of a remarkable career of four-score years, to his new sphere of interest and

conquest, who illustrated for us all the beauty and the power and the glory of magnificently developed Christian character. Of ripe experience, profoundly thoughtful, master of his faculties, benignant, there were many things in and about him to challenge admiration; but the transcendent excellence of the man, the force and quality in him which lifted him into his conspicuous position, and gave weight and majesty to his name whenever it was uttered, was his character. Natural abilities vary; circumstances are more propitious in some cases than in others; but in character the venerable and beloved Dr. Hopkins stood as the type, well-nigh faultless, of what ought to be the aspiration for himself and others of all who are in the kingdom.

4. *The fact that the Kingdom of God secures its enlargement through the knowledge and acknowledgment of Jesus Christ, emphasises both the duty and the privilege of making Christ known to men — to all men everywhere — with all possible energy and fidelity.*

It is but a commonplace in our religious thought to say that Christ is the most pressing need of the world, and the message of supreme importance to be carried to the world; but it is commonplace in the same sense in which the sunshine is commonplace; for it is a fact which never loses its vitality and commanding significance.

This was Christ's own idea of His mission. He was here to meet an exigency which involved the race. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." It would be the crowning service men could render to make the world acquainted with this "only begotten Son," who was given of God to save the perishing; and so the final words which fell from His lips on the ears of the disciples when His great expiatory work was done, and He was about to ascend unto the Father, were these: "All authority has been given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

This was the idea of the Apostles: Christ needed everywhere, and the story of Christ to be told everywhere, told in Jerusalem, in Athens, in Rome — the typical centers of religion

and culture and power — and told outward to the far ends of the earth. Some of these men kindled and glowed in every power and faculty of their natures, with the consuming purpose to go everywhere and brave everything as the messengers of the great salvation. What though they might be charged with being wild enthusiasts or fanatics; what though they might be persecuted and smitten and bruised even to the death; what though their story of the birth and life and death and resurrection and ascension of Jesus might be pronounced foolishness in all cultivated circles? Yet they knew that Christ was the power of God unto salvation, and that their hopes of getting men into the kingdom, and building the kingdom up, were centered in getting men into the intelligent apprehension and sincere acceptance of Jesus Christ.

The duty and the privilege remain. Many centuries have come and gone; defeats have been suffered and victories have been gained; in its laws and manners and customs and habits, and institutions and industries, and ruling languages, the world has greatly changed since those far-away days when the Son of Man trod the dusty thoroughfares of the Holy Land, and laid down His life a ransom for many; there are new methods, and new philosophies, and new sciences, and new political and social economies, and new schools of thought — any number of them; but human nature abides the same, and human need is the same, and the one great word for the Church still to utter, and the one great word for all who would see humanity disenthralled and lifted into the light and liberty of God still to utter, is — Christ. Be the indifference what it may; be the opposition what it may; be the counter-schemes as multitudinous and as inefficient as the sands of the sea-shore, the one word to be spoken, and spoken till it comes back in glad affirmations and jubilant songs of the millions redeemed, is Christ. At all the resplendent centers of liberal learning, where mind is disciplined, and thought is generated, and books are written, it is to be spoken. In all the great capitals of the world, where laws are made, and policies are determined, and governments are administered, it is to be spoken. It is to be spoken in the shining marts of trade and commerce, and amidst the whir of the spindle, and the clatter of the loom, and the thunder of the forge. It is to be spoken in the ear of those who revel in the luxuries of wealth, and of those who know only the wretchedness and squalor of abject poverty. It is to be spoken to dwellers on the prairies and in the valleys, and along

the mountain slopes of America, and to dwellers in the depths of India and China and Japan and Africa. It is the word for the civilized and the uncivilized, for the nominally Christian and the un-Christian, for Jew and Gentile, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman — for the nations through and the ages through.

All divine potencies of light and life and purifying grace are in that one word — Christ. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." Nothing can take the place of the regenerating resources which are in Christ. Nothing is so sure. We may become impatient and feel often that there must be some shorter cut to the ends aimed at in the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the earth; but it is only through the life and light of Christ that permanent advance can be achieved. How many and how imperative the motives for making Christ known to all mankind!

Meanwhile there are self-defensive considerations not a few entering into this problem of building up the Kingdom of God in the earth. We are familiar with the thought of saving the cities to save the country; of saving the West to save the East; of saving the South to save the North. But the law of inter-dependence and mutual relationship has a wider scope. It takes in all the nations and all the races. Not unfrequently one hears the remark, "We must save America for the sake of the world." Yes; but turn the statement about, and there is still a truth in it. We must save the world for the sake of America. Practically this globe of ours is not so big as it once was. Steam and electricity have shriveled it. Oceans and mountains are but slight obstacles to intercourse. Information outruns the speed of the sun in his daily circuit. We send ideas abroad, but we get ideas back again — often incarnated in satanic forms. We get many good things, but not all that we get is good. We import fashions and standards of morals, some of which better have been shut out by a high protective tariff; we import rationalism and socialism; we import full-grown anarchists and all sorts of criminals; we import a European Sabbath and then stand quietly by and see it substituted for our American Sabbath; we import the raw materials of mobs and every kind of outbreak against the peace and order of society; and it is easy for anybody to see that these United States are not what they would be — not what they would be either in civil or social or religious or industrial life — were it not that the nations of Europe are constantly overflowing upon us in the forms of life and

Christianity an Embodiment of the Life of Christ.

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTY-NINTH ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD AT

CLEVELAND, OHIO, OCTOBER 2, 1888.

BY

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SERMON.

"I AM THE LIFE." — *John xiv: 6.* "THE CHURCH, WHICH IS HIS BODY, THE FULLNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL." — *Ephesians i: 23.*

EMBODIMENT is a law of life. So far as we can know it is a necessity of life. Of this natural law in the realm of pure spirit we make here no affirmation, but of the life principle as we are cognizant of it, it is true that unembodied or disembodied it ultimately ceases to be. It may lie dormant, but at last it obeys the hidden impulse toward outward expression, or it perishes. A germ finally becomes germinant or dies.

Each kind of life inevitably and persistently seeks after the outward expression which is its own. In the phenomena of crystallization, which beautifully foreshadow those of life, we find the different kinds of matter striving each after its distinctive form, its hexagon or its rhomboid, and, however thwarted, always doing its best to realize its ideal. In all vegetable and animal life, whatever variation of type may take place in the long processes of creative evolution, the force of life still works under the imperious law which binds every seed to bring forth "after its kind," and which clothes every germ with "its own body."

When we reach that life of man which is the real life, which is characteristic of him as man, and which it must be acknowledged by all, agnostic or Christian, is not the life of the body, does the same law hold good? Is there an ideal form after which the spiritual man strives? Is there a distinctive embodiment of manhood, of character, of selfhood, to which, if let alone, man will attain? This there must be if he is conformed to the cosmos, to the order of things in which he stands. Our answer to this question is: Yes, there is an ideal toward which man's spiritual nature always dimly strives, but man, if left to himself, will not attain that ideal. This is the paradox of human nature. Here also is its mystery and here its tragedy. Man is made in the

image of God. To that divine type he is conformable; but as the very characteristic of that image is in the free will, and in the choice by that free will of holiness, he must of course voluntarily and consciously conform to that type.

Man, because he is man, in order to attain to his perfection, must choose to do it; this he does not of himself do. Pathetic beyond expression, agonizing beyond measure, are the consequences contained in that statement. As a matter of fact, man if left alone does not, by any unconscious force of life in him, realize his ideal, nor is it his ruling purpose to do so. However you may account for it, or by whatever name you may call it, the fact remains. A herd of buffalo on the plains is a herd of buffalo still. Human beings in masses, wherever you find them, not only prey upon, but corrupt one another; they create slums, and often breed down and out. But if you put human beings off in isolation they degenerate. The most unnatural crimes are reported from the remotest hamlets. There is a deadly break here in the ascending series of life. Something there is, terribly wrong with this creature who with his fellows is corrupted, and by himself is debased. This it is, whether you call it weakness or wickedness, unripeness or sin, which makes it needful that he be somehow helped from outside of and above himself.

This is the point of departure of the evangelical faith. It comes, declaring the need, not of development, but of redemption. It proclaims a new divine life, a new man, a new society. Regeneration is its watchword of hope and of power. Man is made for the divine image, but that image is marred and broken. "The forces of his life have become perverted and inverted with every possible abuse." How now shall this lost ideal be realized, this divine image be produced? The image, the likeness, the outward form is evermore the product of the inner life; therefore, to impart the divine image, impart the divine life. There can, in the nature of the case, be no other way; and this is our Christianity.

It is Scougal who has said that "religion is the life of God in the soul of man." May we not add that the history of all true religion is the record of this divine life embodying itself? It is this which will be found at last to give unity to the history of the race itself; "the life of Christ the central period, and the cross of Christ the central point" of it all.

That the idea of embodying the divine life in humanity for its

redemption is the unifying idea of Scripture, no student of the Holy Word can doubt. There are constantly these two factors: God over all; God in all. God to be adored; God to be received. The life of God; the life of God revealed in human lives and human history.

The supreme worth of the history of Israel is in this, that it reveals an embodiment in humanity of the divine idea. This revelation was indeed antecedent to the history of that nation, and even to the covenant with Abraham. It goes back to the beginning; but at last in this people of God, in whom God dwelt, is seen the purpose to incarnate in life and history the divine thought for men. We know in how poor and fragmentary a way Israel realized this, but the history is a testimony. God is manifested. Man is not alone; he is helped by the Eternal. Jacob's vision of the ladder, with angels of God ascending and descending, was an epitome of the old covenant. It was to this that Christ referred when he said, "Hereafter ye shall see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." God is in communication with man. The infinite and the finite are joined. Therefore Israel represented Jehovah among the nations. Through them indeed was his "name profaned among the Gentiles," but after all, the commonwealth of Israel not only upheld a pure monotheism, but, "continuing as it did for generations, free, happy, and prosperous, knowing neither pauperism nor excessive wealth," it was, in its moral code and in its economic and sanitary regulations, a better embodiment of the divine thought for a State than are many of the so-called Christian commonwealths of today. Along with this actual history there runs ever through the Old Testament, in prophecy and song, the sublime conception of the everlasting kingdom of God, of which Israel and her king, and Jerusalem and her palaces, are only symbols.

To the individual believer in that olden time, as to the believer today, God gave not only a law or a ritual, but himself; not alone the Shekinah or the temple, "for thus saith the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit."

If now we read our New Testament with this thought of a divine embodiment in mind it will seem to tell us little else. Everything comes back to this. All miracle, and parable, and

precept, lead us to the esoteric truth of a divine life, given to man and embodied in him.

It was said at the beginning that embodiment was a necessity of life; it is not for us to say that this is true of the infinite principle of all life. We may not declare that incarnation is the law of the Eternal Spirit, but we have learned in our day that the conception of an absent and far-off God is pagan, and that God, immanent in nature and in the world, is the truth of Holy Scripture. There is a Christian pantheism which sees in every cosmic or psychic force the divine power manifested; which interprets the unfolding leaf and flower or the uprising of a great people alike, as the signs of God's life revealing itself. We may not declare embodiment to be a necessity of the divine life, but we are taught of the Spirit that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God."

Central, luminous, glorious, in Scripture is the revelation of the God-man. In the person of the Christ this fact of the incarnation has entered into our human history.

This is not a shadow, a dream, a sentiment, a creation of the philosophic or poetic imagination; it is the central historic fact from which, by inductive process, we build the form and structure of our theology. This fact of incarnation is the keystone of the arch of Christian truth; that gone, the whole structure lies in fragments. This, therefore, for missionary and minister, is the beginning of all preaching. "Whom we preach." Dr. Bushnell has written: "Considered as the God-man, then, there is not a single fact or scene in the history which, fully conceived, does not yield some lesson of power. The infancy; the thirty years of silent preparation; the recoil of poor human nature, called the temptation, when the work begins; every healing, every miracle, every friendship, every condemnation, every denunciation, the lot of poverty, the hour of oppressed feeling, the weariness and sleep; the miraculous hem of his garment; the transfiguration; the prayers; the amazing assumption of a common glory and right with the Father; the agony, the trial, the crucifixion, the resurrection, the appearings and teachings afterwards; and, last of all, the ascension, followed by the descent of the Spirit to represent and be himself, according to his promise, a Christ everywhere present, everywhere accessible, no longer limited and localized in space;

in all these, and in all he said and taught concerning God, himself and us, the preacher is to find staple matter for his messages."

"In the fullness of time" there was the life upon the earth of this one who could say: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" of whom, by his servant Paul, it is declared: "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the God-head bodily" (Col. ii: 9), and this was for the redemption of man. The divine image is to be implanted. How? By implanting the divine life. "I am the life;" "Because I live, ye shall live also;" "I in the Father and ye in me, and I in you;" "I am the vine, ye are the branches;" "Apart from me ye can do nothing;" "Christ in you, the hope of glory." These are a few of the passages that plainly teach the reality of the indwelling presence of Christ in the believer, as the life of his life. To those in unbelief he declares, "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life."

He is represented as the second Adam, the progenitor of a new race. This life is received by an entire turning away from the old life and by an entire trusting of the soul to him, that is, by repentance and faith. To the open soul he comes in. He is born in the man. This is regeneration by the power of the Holy Spirit. There is a new motive, a new controlling love, a new governing purpose. Christ is now "formed in him." It is now, "Christ in him the hope of glory." Now the new life shapes its manifestation; now consciously, also, he strives after this, and more and more, unconsciously, every thought and activity is molded by this life. This is the profound meaning of that saying, "In him is life, and the life is the light of men." Light is that by means of which we see where we go—"the life is the light;" this is the guiding principle. There is now supplied for the man what the plants have, each in its unconscious striving after its ideal, a guiding, molding, shaping force, a life principle that will embody itself in Christ-form; we can now have a Christ-man, a Christian. This is the soul of Christian experience.

If there be any reality in the united testimony of all the believers of the Christian centuries, then is this real: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." In the personal life this will determine its aim—to be like him, this will fill the thought. The redeemed man is this: One in whom thus the divine image is being formed, who is

attaining unto a "full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Nothing higher than this can be imagined; nothing less than this can satisfy.

So in our efforts for others, this will determine our action. What a man knows or believes, where he is, what he has, these things are not for him of great consequence, save as they effect this embodiment in him of this divine life; for being is more than getting. We seek not to make adherents to our creed or our name, but to make Christ-men; to reproduce the life of Christ in the regenerate and sanctified life of his followers. The truth we preach is the truth which a man may become.

This shows to us, not only our aim, but our method also. Those who thus embody Christ, represent Christ. He is known through them, and through them he does his saving work. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth," saith our Lord, "will draw all men unto myself." How shall he be lifted up before the nations? By tireless proclamation of the history? Yes, but also by lives of love in sacrifice. After his resurrection, in the upper chamber, Jesus said to them again: "Peace be with you." "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." We, then, are to be in the world as he was in the world. Brethren, determining to know only Christ and him crucified, it is not the iteration of a man-made theory of the atonement linked in concatenations of logic and buttressed with Scripture texts, which, when it is finished, is usually a lifeless thing, and when it is preached has little power over heart and conscience; nor is it solely the repeating of that story which shall never lose its power, of the cross on which the Prince of Life died, and from which the drops of his atoning blood fell upon our earth; nor is it alone by the continued showing forth of his death until he come, in the holy eucharist of his appointment. It is along with all this, the giving of our own lives in Christ's name to save men, as Christ gave his life — for the despised ones, for the weak ones, for the worst ones, for the unthankful, for enemies. It is giving the life for these in solitariness as he did, in persecution, and if need be in death, as he did. Ah! if we could but so embody Christ, by thus dying to self and the world, thus sacrificing all for others, then should we in truth know nothing among men save Christ and him crucified; then in reality would he be perpetually lifted up, and all men be drawn unto him. He alone "bore our sins in his own body on the

tree;" in his finished work our souls repose; nevertheless it is needful that those who come after him should, like him, come under the universal law of vicarious suffering if they would help in saving men. The apostle Paul waxes very bold, and declares to the Colossians: "I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church." We get thus some glimpse of the scope and meaning of the truth of the embodiment of Christ's life in the personal life.

But we are reminded by this passage, as by our text, that the individual life is not the only embodiment of Christ. There is, we know, a perfection of humanity beyond that of the individual. The family, as we sometimes for a little while see it, illustrates this. In the ideal home are the wisdom and dignity of age, the calm strength of mature life, the enthusiasm of youth, and the sweet charms of childhood and infancy. Thus all forces and aptitudes of diverse sex and temperament, of differing age and relation, blended in the mutual ministries of love, make up a corporate existence which, informed and irradiated by the Spirit of God, is a higher product of spiritual life than any one of its members can be. A Christian household, as a silent witness to the power of Christ and as an effective agent in the work of Christ, is something other and more than the sum of the testimony and work of its members.

There is a provision made for a still more exalted embodiment of spiritual life in the local church, made up of Christian families, which, shaping organization, worship, and work, according to the law of its own inward divine life, unites tendencies, harmonizes efforts, utilizes gifts, compacts strength, and so "may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building of itself in love." This conception meets its culmination in the representations in the New Testament of the church universal, as revealed in the text; "His body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." It will find its realization in the consummations of human history in that day when we behold "the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God."

Are we dealing here only with metaphors? Surely not. There is imbedded in Christianity, not as an incidental or an ancillary element, but as organic and essential, the idea of an embodiment of Christ's life in this world in a renovated society. That "incarnation in order to redemption" is the phrase out of the unfolding of which comes the logical and orderly statement of all Christian truth, some of us were taught as pupils in theology, and to the careful student this grows every day more evident; but it remains to be announced and to be acknowledged, that *the truth of incarnation is the key to every practical problem that confronts humanity and the church.* Human nature confessing Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, as our Lord himself tells us, is the rock upon which he will build his invincible church; but that confession of him must be not of the intellect alone, with the lips, but also in the life and in the life of the church. Now, he is known through his church. The eminent divine charter of the church is contained in the words: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Whenever there is a true gathering together and a gathering together truly in the name of Christ, there is a true church, and where the true church is, there always is the indwelling Christ. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof." He lives in his church, he works through it. "Apart from me ye can do nothing." The birthday of the church was Pentecost, when the living Spirit took possession of the body.

Now, it is this truth of a living Christ in his church that is needed; faith, not alone in her mighty Lord who went away, though it was to return, but in the continued presence of her mighty Lord; belief, not alone in the incarnation as an accomplished fact, but *belief also in a derived and continued incarnation through Christ in his church*, "I in them, thou in me."

When we speak of the church, we should mean one of three things — either the church local; the church catholic, embracing all at one time upon the earth who have been baptized into the Christian name, the good and the evil; and lastly, the church universal, in which is contained all of every age and name and race in whom the power of sin has been broken, who have been forgiven and sanctified. To each of these it belongs to realize in its measure the manifestation of Christ's life; to be his body. The church, which is in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, each local

body, is called to be this. The church now dismembered and separated, scattered in all lands, called by many names, is called as never before to be this; but the language of the text suggests an embodiment which can only be realized in the consummation of history by the church universal. I am not sure about the precise exegetical meaning of the text, "The church, his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all," but I am sure that there is an exceeding largeness in it. The risen, glorified, triumphant, reigning Lord finds in it complete representation of himself. "The fullness of him that filleth all in all." Then his enemies shall have been made his footstool, and all men shall know the Lord. Then "the kingdom of the world shall have become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." The church will then be the world, and the world the church. That reign is to be not only over all races, but over all forces. That kingdom shall include in its scope and sweep all of good that the kingdom of the world had striven for. "They shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it." In that day shall be fulfilled, not only Isaiah's prophecy, "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising," but also Ezekiel's vision of the spirit of the living creature moving all the wheels. There shall be rulership in and over the forces and the uniformities of nature, as well as the hearts of men. When man's moral likeness shall be restored, there shall be given to him his full dominion over the creatures, which by sin he lost. That is what this age of science means; of this it gives us foregleams. It is not a revolt from God, but a preparation for his kingdom. A godless science, like King Hiram's workmen in forests and mines afar from Jerusalem, is patiently, though all unconsciously, preparing the pillars and the ornaments for a temple in which shall dwell the shekinah of a manifested Divinity whose very existence it denies.

The ages shall not go backward, nor the long results of time be lost. No province of knowledge shall be given back to ignorance; no victory over nature surrendered; no force tamed and harnessed let go. The steel rails are not to be taken up, nor the wires to be taken down, nor the printing presses to be destroyed, except to give place to more perfect appliances. A more complex civilization than ours there will be, if this kingdom is ever set up on the earth, and all will be informed and vivified by the Spirit of the living God.

The essential nature of the kingdom of God is indeed spiritual, but the spiritual is by inherent necessity forever clothing itself in form, is always weaving from the material the outward symbol of itself. The outcome of human history will be not solitude, but society; not the Garden of Eden come back, but the City of God come down.

We have been afraid to assert the ascendancy of Christ over the agencies and forces that we call natural; but to whom do they belong if not to him? This world is his, he made it — all that it contains is his of right, and shall certainly be brought to minister to those who are the heirs of salvation. Why should we not recognize in its full import this fact? It gives us the right, and imposes upon us the duty of possessing all agencies and informing with the spirit of Christ all forces, *now*. The law of the correlation of force goes higher than the region of physics. Instead of fearing lest we dishonor the gospel if we use the latest and the best appliances of this age of scientific method, we need rather to reproach ourselves lest we defraud the church of its rightful inheritance by neglecting them. Shall we use sails to give God opportunity to send us favoring winds? Whose gifts are those astounding and beneficent discoveries of our time? For what purpose are they? Are these newest marvels a malign element in the world's life? That depends on the use made of them. They may be used to build Babylon for destruction, or the city of the King as an habitation for his saints forever. Peter's vision upon the housetop had its application for him in his time; may it not reach us also, "What God hath cleansed call not thou common?" In this connection notice the context, "and he put all *things* in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all *things* to the church." The divine is to possess the human — science and industry, commerce and arts, literature and statesmanship, society, education, amusements, philanthropy, are all some day to be possessed for Christ and by Christ. Why hesitate, then, to begin to possess them now?

In old time there was an inspiration of the Spirit of God in Bezaleel, to devise cunning works in gold and in silver, and in brass, as well as of Moses to decree statutes and judgments. In the New Testament description of the body of Christ there is the hand and the foot, as well as the eye and the tongue, and upon the less honorable was bestowed more abundant honor; and

so it came to pass that there was the upbuilding of the one body. We expect Moses to build a tabernacle without the help of Bezaleel; we ordain for missionaries hearts, and brains, and tongues, and forget to send along feet and hands. In our lofty and scriptural conception of the efficacy of preaching, we have sometimes forgotten that "the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you."

It is one of the marked characteristics of the religious movements of our time, that there is a recognition of the need of a varied ministry, not the varied ministry of one man, but the ministry of varied men, and so of an embodied gospel. The discussions of the London Conference showed this trend. The interdenominational meetings in Mexico revealed the same. A doctrine of obstacles was recognized; the fact that sometimes it is wise instead of spending time in firing up the locomotive to get down and shovel the sand off the track. The encyclical of the Pan-Anglican Council gives small space to doctrine, or order, or ritual, and makes large mention of temperance, social purity, the sanctity of marriage, and Sabbath observance. It affirms the social and political life of the day to be the proper field for Christian work.

In several of our theological seminaries there are now courses of instruction in sociology, which modern science I understand to be the second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," intelligently carried out in its general applications.

Consider, too, the nature of the argument now mainly put forward in defense of Christianity. The internal evidence is not discredited, but the chief reliance is on the embodied fact that Christianity is. This age demands facts, and we confront it with — first, Christ himself; second, the transformed characters and lives of individuals; and third, with the history and the spectacle of Christendom. History is appealed to with a new fullness and with overwhelming force. A distinguished cardinal of the Roman church has recently presented in a succinct and powerful manner the argument from the continuous organized and visible life of Christianity in the world; but to his brethren outside of the pale it seems evident that he weights down and immeasurably weakens his plea by urging the exclusive claims of Rome; and that he strangely fails to notice that the cities and the lands where that form of Christianity has had longest and most exclusive sway are the very ones that are

conspicuous for the absence in them of the light and liberty, the peace, righteousness, and true progress which the gospel brings. There has been lately published a book which has put the entire church, and the republic of letters as well, under obligations to its author. Its chapters move on one after another like regiments, with perfect alignment and in faultless form. Every paragraph carries a weapon of truth, and the light of heaven gleams on their polished sentences. Over them all is the beauty of the banner with the sign in which the Christian hosts conquer; while behind comes a ponderous and royal train laden with treasures of the ages and with ammunition of the latest form — an appendix, full and precious. This army corps is called *The Divine Origin of Christianity Indicated by its Historical Effects.*

Suffer me now to call attention to signs in the same direction in the operations of our own Board. I pass the altered policy as regards education, and mention, as an illustration of the embodiment of Christianity, the *medical work* of the Board.

This is coming yearly into increasing prominence, and its relations to the educational and evangelistic departments are being fully adjusted. It is now understood that the dispensary and hospital are as inherently a part of a complete mission station as the chapel or the school. On them also belongs the sacred symbol of the cross. In the mission rooms at Boston there is upon the wall a large, red tablet, inscribed with gilt Chinese characters, which was originally placed in 1875 upon the walls of Dr. Osgood's hospital at Foochow, by a Chinese military officer, to commemorate a cure wrought upon him. A native band of musicians and a liberal expenditure of fire-crackers attended when he put the tablet in position, and afterwards he made a liberal offering in money to the hospital. So often on heathen ground the work and workers are brought into notice and into favor, even as the multitude thronged to Jesus when he healed them. By this means also is opportunity afforded for direct religious instruction and influence. But beyond all this there is a practical teaching concerning the nature of our Christianity; not a teaching, indeed, by word of mouth, but an embodied Christianity. Wherever on heathen ground our beloved missionary physicians rear the hospital and the dispensary they present an object lesson; and it consists not only in a practical teaching of the golden rule, but it also may declare unmistakably the foundation fact that the

gospel offers a whole salvation, considers sacred and seeks to redeem man — the entire man, the body as well as the spirit. In other words it continues the work of Jesus Christ, who, when upon the earth, made men whole. The gospel is thus saved from an inadequate, unsymmetrical, and in so far forth, false embodiment.

My meaning may be illustrated further by the providential trend of our mission work, abroad as well as at home, towards *industrial training*. If the great care bestowed by our Lord upon the bodies of men has for us a profound meaning and suggestion, no less should we be taught by the honor he put upon physical toil, upon the industries of the hand, upon the artisan and the laboring man. We shall not rightly embody the Master's life in our generation if we forget the carpenter shop at Nazareth, where with his own hands he earned his own bread, or the nets and the boats of Galilee where he found the earliest of his disciples. Hard work is God's ordinance for the moral training of us all. More than we even yet suppose, is human well-being involved in the manual labor problem, and in the various aspects of the industrial question. Woe to the sons of men when the conditions of their lot make labor either needless or hopeless.

The conditions of human life are such, that for the transformation of man there must be the grace of God plus hard work. This is not a discovery of our day; it was an apostolic message to new converts that they "work with their hands," as he had charged them, in order that they might be honest toward outsiders, and themselves have need of nothing. And it has been found that this very thing, "working with the hands," is that in which instruction is most needed. Those monks found it so who plunged into the gloomy depths of the endless forests that covered mediæval Europe, to proclaim the gospel to the warring pagans that lived there; and they showed them how to guide the plow, plant the orchard, and build the mill, while they taught them the gospel, the chant, and the litany. That was a wonderful model for an evangelizing church in the midst of our modern nineteenth century paganism, given us by the old Benedictines in the days when they were true missionaries, before the salt had lost its savor. Going in a band among the wild tribes, they built first their place of worship; on it they lavished their choicest treasure; but soon around the abbey church sprung up one after another the great kitchen where the poor were fed, the hospital where the poor sick were

attended, the school into which the surrounding boys were gathered, the chapter house where the laws of the order were enacted, and the library in which the priceless treasures of learning were preserved.

The Moravians — how fragrant to this day the name! — of whom Chalmers said, "that for the charm by which they wrought he would willingly exchange all the parade of human eloquence and all the confidence of human argument," — they found it so. The carpenter and the potter went along with the knight, and sought like the tent-maker of Tarsus to be chargeable to none. They have consistently tried, at least by example, to develop this industrial idea.

In an old life of Rev. John Sargeant, the first missionary to the Housatonic Indians in western Massachusetts, it appears that he had by elaborate plans provided for the development of the industrial idea, and so anticipated more than a hundred years Hampton, and Carlisle, and the Santee Agency. The experiment was tried in the Sandwich Islands, not with complete success; but the Hilo school was always a labor school, and the testimony is that it fitted the best teachers and missionaries that the islands produced, and that their students are today among the solid men of the country. At the present time there are in operation under our Board five industrial schools — one in Bulgaria, one in Turkey, one in Ceylon, one in South Africa, and one in India. The Deccan Industrial School at Sirur, in the Poona district of India, issues its report just now, with a print upon the cover of a Holy Bible radiating light, while in a circle about it are the common implements of industry — the pick-ax and the plow, the square and the plane, the saw and the hammer, the shovel, the ax and the anvil; and over all we read the legend, "The Hope of India." The disabilities imposed by caste make the truth thus expressed emphatically true for that vast empire; but the application of it is universal.

The first and most urgent stage of mission work is: "Hold the rope and I will go down;" but there comes a second, when it becomes necessary to ask: What shall I do with this man that I have taken out of the pit? It is perfectly true that that which is secondary in the first stage of mission work becomes primary in the second stage. The logic of events justifies the saying of a distinguished son of one of our noblest missionaries: "If mission work begins by proclaiming the gospel, it must end by organizing

society." There has been no organific force in the political and social changes that are bringing in the better day to be for a moment compared to that of the value put by Christ upon the least and the weakest of mankind.

Now there is certainly grave danger that in the development of these features of which mention has been made the value of the individual soul, as seen in the light of eternity, should be lost sight of, and primary spiritual work be subordinated; but certainly it need not be so. John Frederick Oberlin proved that, more than a hundred years ago, among the debased descendants of the Huguenots, who for seven generations had been isolated and abandoned in the mountains of the Vosges. Home life, education, industrial arts, tree-planting, road-making, did not cool his ardor for souls or cause him to feel any the less his dependence on God, but they made possible and permanent a work, the record of which might be for today a text-book on the embodiment of Christianity. Surely spirituality should be increased by any service that can be done in Christ's name, for those for whom Christ died. Brainard, prostrate before God, agonizing for souls, melting the hearts of his poor Indians by the flaming love of his appeals, was a divinely spiritual man. He prayed and toiled in view of the issues of eternity, and was rewarded by amazing scenes of the converting power of the Spirit of God. Those converts of his did nothing to perfect society. The very tribes to which they belonged are no more, but their redeemed souls are glorifying their Saviour. Brainard stands as a most exalted type of the missionary.

Henry Martyn, working on in the midst of frightful crowds of serpentine, bestial, low-caste Hindoos, writes in what has been called "the most pathetic of all journals:" "I lay in tears interceding for the unfortunate natives of this country, thinking within myself that the most despicable Sudra of India was of as much value in the sight of God as the King of Great Britain;" and further, "I found my heaven begun on earth — no work so sweet as that of praying and living wholly to the service of God." What wonder that the spot where he used to kneel has become one of the places of Christian pilgrimage in India? Better in God's sight, and better for the eternal kingdom of God, one Brainard or Martyn, with no agency but the Word and the Spirit of God, than ten thousand of what Christleib calls "culture fanatics." But Christian Frederick Schwartz was as noble a type as either of them, and he was a

builder. This is a picture of him, from the "Dawn of the Modern Mission:" "And so through years of storm and carnage we see this simple-minded, simple-living Christian missionary becoming a political power for the time, sent on critical embassies between contending armies, because it is safe for no other man to go, administering a whole province, and writing elaborate state minutes upon the collection of revenue and the procedure of justice, and turned back by no danger from any work to which he had set his hand; yet never pausing in his work of preaching Jesus Christ, and opening stations and training native workers, and caring for the neglected soldiers, and building shelters for the orphans, and laying up, like Joseph, large provision for the years of famine; plain, unpretending figure, clad in black dimity, and found everywhere with ministering hand where sorrow, suffering, or need called him."

As a rule, spiritual intensity will depend upon concentration, but others may do what the preacher may not.

Certainly it is plain that a practical test of Christianity is at this time demanded from two opposite directions. On the one hand we are asked for a distinctly unworldly, extra-worldly evidence; but on the other it is as distinctly and more commonly and persistently said, Christianity is not meeting the demands of our modern life as a practical force in society. Whatever may be true of its doctrines it is not taking hold of the hard social questions of the day; it is not leading the reform for humanity. Must it not be acknowledged that as in the doctrine of the person of Christ there has been held a one-sided view, obscuring, now his divinity and now his humanity; so in the church life as representing him has there been partial expression? Sometimes the divine presence has been ignored, the divine prerogatives omitted, and the church of Christ, so called, has ended in a lifeless school of ethical culture, in cold and hard social science, in thin colorless secularism, the supernatural denied, the mystery of life forgotten. With no cross and no resurrection in its history, and no judgment in its horizon, it has power over neither heart nor conscience; and with no message but a denial of faith, and no evangel but the evolution of humanity, it is without a prayer in its weakness or a song in its work. This is the most barren product of our nineteenth century religious life, the least among the spiritual forces of our time.

This is the church with the Christhood gone out of it — "humanitarianism," the least of all isms.

But again, the church has become a poor weak thing, because of isolation from human interests. There has been at times a fatal "otherworldliness" as well as worldliness. In contemplation of the unseen and the eternal, the present, on which it all depends, has been well-nigh forgotten; in awe of the supernatural of the gospels, and of the infinite possibilities of the life to come, the life that now is has been belittled and neglected.

Here therefore is indicated the two directions in which our church life needs to be developed: first, in the direction of a return to the out-and-out supernaturalism of the primitive church; and second, in the direction of a thorough application of the gospel to the problems of modern social life in the spirit and by the methods of a true science. These two things seem very different. They have been kept apart, but Christ united the human and the divine, and the church is the body of Christ. The call of God is back to the primitive faith. Give us this and we shall see the primitive heroism. Our answer to the challenge of modern unbelief must be not an apology for, or an explanation of, the miraculous in our gospel, but an assertion of it and a return to it; instantaneous conversions, transformed characters, supernatural lives of sacrifice, mighty works of love — this first, and then a new assertion of the human side, a broadening of the sphere of the church, a thorough humanizing of its mission. It is the entire truth of incarnation that we need. It is a whole Christ that we want, not an applied but an embodied Christianity.

And now permit me to ask, do we not have here in this truth of life the philosophical, practical basis for our theory of missions; in this truth of embodiment of life the organific idea for the shaping of all agencies, plans, and policies? For example, the Board, if it is an organ of the churches, an expression of their life, should seek above all things else in the conduct of its affairs to keep in close vital connection with the churches. If it embodies the spiritual force of the churches in the greatest work given them to do in this world, then the union with the churches cannot be too close. It is not the method, but the fact, that is essential.

If this is a life process which we seek to promote, so that there is to be an unfolding by each person, by each church, and by each group of churches, under the control of the Christ type,

of its own distinctive life, then evidently we must expect in a world-wide work variety of form and of administration, in the midst of general uniformity, according to the law of all life. It follows also that we may not expect to combine in one person, or in one class of persons, all needed gifts. The teaching is that "there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit, and there are diversities of administration, but the same Lord." "Gifts of healing, helps, governments," as well as prophets and teachers; the lesson is not the multiplying, as we have been largely doing, the agents of one kind, but the multiplying of the kind of agents. It further follows that liberty to each individual and church for honest thinking and acting, is a very sacred right and an entirely essential thing. It is significant that Christleib, after his deliberate study of the whole field, should say: "There is nothing in which a man should work so little, according to a definite model, as in missions."

Again, it follows that the principle of judgment is that which our Lord declared: "By their fruits shall ye know them," and that the divine method of administration is revealed in that saying of his: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit." For missionaries we must then have men and women who are branches of the true vine, who believe in and believe on "Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the living God," implicitly accept his teaching, and who are members of his visible body; men and women, therefore, who have received into their own souls, from him, by the Spirit, a new life, and who embody in lives of love, in sacrifice, this life; men and women, therefore, whose strenuous effort it shall be to save now, in this accepted time, individual souls for whom Christ died, by urging upon them the free offer of eternal life, and who shall train them to embody this same eternal life, individually and collectively, in the verities of character and of conduct.

At our mission stations we need, in obedience to the same principle, to promote the conditions for such organic life as shall in the local church best realize, at any given place or time, by the informing power of the indwelling Spirit, the scriptural idea of the church as Christ's body; representing to the world his thought, his feeling, his will; which shall rightly express in its relation to all other Christian bodies, the true oneness of all Christians, the

unity in diversity of the true church catholic; and which shall so ally itself with, possess, and use all the agencies and forces about it, as to illustrate the truth that Christ is the head not only over all races, but over "all things," to his church, which in its last results shall be seen to be "the fullness of him who filleth all in all."

Concerning polity, may I reiterate that our principle, which demands outward form — more it may be than we have always had — demands also that it be flexible to the changing wants of changing times. Organization cannot be confined in the rigid lines of the politico-ecclesiasticism of the past. That cannot be kept in the narrow limits imposed by one age or nation, which was meant for all lands and for the everlasting years. The forces of the future are only germinant today; life is growth, truth is progress, and history is development. We look before, not behind; forward, not back. Especially in the interest of that unity — not uniformity — which the world wants, and the heart of Christendom longs for, do we plead for the *life idea versus the ecclesiastical idea.*

There are two existing theories, which from the nature of the case are irreconcilable: One is that our Lord committed the purity of doctrine, the exercise of discipline, and the leadership in work, to a select body of men supernaturally endowed, who by the laying on of their hands should convey this supernatural power, this divinely given prerogative of rulership, from generation to generation. The organization and forms of the church are thus independent of the people of the church, and not the outgrowth and embodiment of their spiritual life. By whatever name called, this is the prelatical, the hierarchical church.

The other theory is that the rulership belongs to the childlike spirit; that purity of doctrine, faithfulness in discipline, and responsibility for spreading the kingdom, depend ultimately upon the membership; that our Lord committed to each succeeding generation of those gathered together in his name, *and not to an order of men among them*, the honor of his kingdom and of his name. They believe that he is now, today, in his church, and that by his Holy Spirit, in each succeeding generation, believers are taught and guided; that, having given to his followers his Spirit, he is not afraid to trust them with his cause. These two theories are diametrically opposite; all dreams of unity between them are idle. Any church that attempts to mediate these two

within itself is destined to division, and the line of cleavage is already determined. Under one or the other of them the unity of the church of the future will be found. We do not believe that it will come under the first. Accepting the latter, there may be the adoption of any forms or methods made most expedient by the character and circumstances of the people and by the exigencies of the work, be it an archbishop with his "throne" and his "palace" — no, that is going too far — but be it a diocesan bishop or a Congregational church meeting.

We plead, also in the interest of unity, for the *life idea versus the logic idea.* Logic and metaphysics are inseparable from any worthy study of the Christian system, but we are consulting about a working Christianity, and for this we contend that we need not a common theological science, but the same constructive force; not a metaphysic but a fact; not a dogma but an experience; not a syllogism but a history. Let us send into the Lord's vineyard to keep the vines, trained gardeners rather than skilled dialecticians. We can come together over the best methods of cultivating the vine, but the task would be more difficult upon an hypothesis concerning theodicy.

The outlook towards Christian unity in the foreign field is cheering. The movement towards this in Japan and in Mexico, the ardent expression of desire for it from every land, and the discussions at missionary conferences, national and international, are full of hope. Brethren from other lands and in other lands, the body of Christ is one. We too believe in the holy catholic church; we are tired of divided counsel, of sectarian separateness, and of the sinful waste of men and money in rival organizations and multiplied machinery; but we are shut in by old names and traditions, and hampered by complications of vested interests, selfish ambitions, and predilections that are in the blood. You are free. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Write that on your banners. In the providence of God you are called to be the leaders in this world-wide movement of the time. Sagacious minds have long seen that the unity for which the church wearily waits is to come through practical coöperation in bringing in the kingdom of God. To you, brethren in foreign fields, it is given to bring to an issue the providential new conditions of life and thought, by practical unity in saving men. Go on then. From this platform we bid you God speed. A bold, vigor-

ous, patient policy of coöperation, let us hope confederation, is called for. Such policy adopted will commend itself to the business common sense of every enlightened person, and will meet quick response in every Christian heart. If our Congregational Christianity means anything it is this: liberty to embody itself, with Christ as the head, in such manner as shall at any time be anywhere right and expedient.

So, then, I leave this boundless theme, and cease the repetition to you of this high, this deep, this broad word, life. How sweet the "silver iterance!" All beauty, all joy, all blessing are in it; all hope and realization, all unfolding and fruition, all fullness and all perfection. The one sacred thing, the one priceless thing, the one ineffable blessing, is life. It is "more life and fuller" that we need. This is the name of the King. He came into a world of the dying and of the dead, and he said: "I am the life." This is God's unspeakable gift, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. At last this divine life shall find its complete embodiment in glory everlasting, and he "shall be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

The Christian Church essentially Missionary

ANNUAL SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

DELIVERED TUESDAY EVENING

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BY THE

REV. LEWELLYN PRATT, D.D.

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SERMON.

"JESUS THEREFORE SAID TO THEM AGAIN, PEACE BE UNTO YOU: AS THE FATHER HATH SENT ME, EVEN SO SEND I YOU. AND WHEN HE HAD SAID THIS, HE BREATHED ON THEM, AND SAITH UNTO THEM, RECEIVE YE THE HOLY SPIRIT: WHOSE SOEVER SINS YE FORGIVE, THEY ARE FORGIVEN UNTO THEM; WHOSE SOEVER SINS YE RETAIN, THEY ARE RETAINED." — *John xx: 21–23.*

Brethren and Fathers: These words take us back to the beginnings of the Christian Church. They define its mission, confirm its authority, and reveal its world-wide power.

If there be any special occasion when the Christian Church may appropriate the high-priestly prayer of Jesus Christ just before he yielded up his life, and come under the baptism of his first meeting with the disciples after his resurrection, when he formally and for all time commissioned them — it is in such services as this which calls us together tonight. We are gathered from our distributed tasks to counsel for the work of the Church in the world, to study the plan of the Leader, and to learn the nature of the commission from the Head of the movement, from the King who sends the embassy of which we are a part.

Going back, then, to that prayer of consecration, in which Jesus surveys the extent of the work intrusted to him, we hear him praying for new means of action upon the world. Having finished the part to be accomplished by his visible presence, he asks for himself restoration to the complete exercise of divine powers, of which he had for the time divested himself. Not simply for restoration to divine blessedness and glory does he ask — for the aim of that petition is not his own satisfaction — but the continuation and finishing of his work — "that thy Son may glorify Thee," and "that the world may believe that Thou didst send me."

Assuming, now, what he had up to this time forbidden the disciples to use, the title of "the Christ," that they may have his sanction for its use, since he is in "a little while" to commit his

work on earth to them and to give them the new word of command for mankind, he prays by an appeal to the decree of the Father — "as Thou hast given Him power" — the decree by which sovereignty over the whole human race — "all flesh" — had been conferred upon him as Redeemer and Saviour. That sovereignty, he, "the Christ," is now to use as the basis of the command to go and disciple all the nations — that is, to take possession of them in his name.

He prays, also, for the special band whom he had chosen and kept, and for all who should believe on him through them, that they may be sanctified and be brought into oneness with the Father and himself, in order that through them, whom he has not simply prepared to be taken out of the world, but who are to remain in the world, and whom he sends into the world as the Father had sent him — that through them the world may know God, the holy and righteous Father, and Jesus Christ, and, receiving that knowledge and believing it, may have eternal life. He concentrates his prayer on them, the missionaries of the truth to the whole world, on them "alone" for the world's sake. He contemplates them as sent as truly as he was, and as so united into oneness with him that he is made the head of one long line of confessors and martyrs who labor and struggle for the sake of God's glory. Hence they have been called out of the world and sanctified — set apart and made holy — lifted into a higher sphere of life and action and power, and thence can be sent on the same mission. As he was sent from heaven to touch and renew the life of man by the communication of the knowledge of the true God, so, having brought up into that knowledge and life chosen ones, he is about to send them, in whom that life is embodied, to be heralds and propagators of that knowledge in all the world.

Accordingly we find, on the evening of the resurrection, he appears to his disciples to prove that his prayer for himself was in a measure answered, to confirm their faith in him, reunite them to him, open their minds that they may understand the Scriptures concerning him, and to show that Christ must needs suffer and rise again, "that repentance and remission of sins be preached in his name unto all the nations." The apprehension of the gospel was followed at once by the charge to proclaim it; the work of Christ, finished in one sense, was to be continued in another, and

fresh powers were divinely provided for fresh duties. The disciples, awakening from the joy of surprise, passed into the joy of calm assurance; but, convinced as to the present and enlightened as to the past, the mighty future lay before them unknown and unexplained. "Jesus *therefore* said to them *again*, Peace be unto you." He had spoken to them the word of "peace" for themselves — peace in the certainty that death had been overcome, in restored fellowship with the lost Master, in the words which removed from them their burden of sin — "and the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord." Through his return they had been completely changed; they had tasted the powers of the spiritual world.

But the shut doors remind them of a world hostile and powerful, and this world was to be met and conquered. The words, "Ye are my witnesses" "unto all the nations," showed them their mission; they could not remain isolated and inactive. *Therefore*, in prospect of the vast undertaking which they had not yet attempted, using the strength of renewed personal faith, starting from the vantage-ground of quickened hope and reaching forth at once to the last issues of Christian effort, Jesus said to them *again*, "Peace be unto you!" Not merely as believers now, but as missionaries to the world, he brings from the grave this message of reconciliation and peace they will have the task of proclaiming to the world, that they may be able to say: "We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." He confers the vocation, then the gift of power in the measure now possible, then the greatness of the task. And we note that our Lord here is not speaking exclusively to his apostles; there is here no special apostolic pitch of duty. These words were not addressed to all the apostles, nor to the ten alone. Others were with them; the commission and the promise were given, like the Pentecostal blessing, to the body of disciples, and not to any special order in it. The work which is described deals with sin and its pardon, and is to manifest the divine will and not to determine it. To all Christians as such, to ministers and to people alike, and while they are as yet undistinguished from each other, he directs the words of sovereign power in the announcement of his victory over death and sin. The message of the gospel is the

glad tidings of sin conquered. To convey and apply *this* is the office of the Church, and so of each member of the Church.

In the very terms used he shows that he is the one apostle; the mission of the disciples is included in his, and is simply to realize that to the world. He claims this in the word used to express *his* sending, while in passing it on to them he uses a simpler word implying a sending under that. He is the apostle; they are his evangelists. And as there is properly but one mission, there is also but one force for fulfilling, that which he communicates through the Spirit. Raised himself to a higher stage, Jesus raises them by the Spirit to this new position, associates them in his state as raised from the dead — just as later at Pentecost he will make them participate through the Spirit in his state as glorified — communicates to them the spirit of adoption, and the spirit of wisdom in the understanding of the Scriptures, and the spirit of power in bringing their wills into unison with his, that they may be prepared for their new work — offering salvation to every human being in the name of Christ.

"Peace be unto you."

"I send you *into the world* as the Father hath sent me."

"Receive ye the Holy Spirit."

"Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven."

I. CHRIST'S MISSION, THE PATTERN.

Christ's mission to the world is our starting-point as we strive to find the motive lying back of the Christian Church. He himself makes this the pattern for his disciples, and declares the extent and character of the sympathy which must subsist between them and their pattern. The most absolute oneness of heart, will, and life is required of them. To believe in him implicitly; to receive his mind on all things as perfect wisdom, his will as absolute law; to be able to cry to him as he cried to the Father — "not my will, but thine, be done" — this is the spirit of Christian discipleship. It is not merely the fact of *a* mission, but the character of *the* mission which Christ dwells upon in likening the disciples to himself in their relation to the world. He assumes it to be possible that his followers enter into the spirit that inspired his coming, the spirit that Paul illustrates when he says to the Colossians: "I fill up on my part that which is lacking of the

afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church; . . . to fulfill the word of God, even the mystery which hath been hid from all ages and generations: but now hath it been manifested to his saints, to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

We do not forget that there is the great distinctive work of Jesus Christ, in which man has no partnership, which was done once for all and declared to be finished — that work by which he put away sin by the one great sacrifice which he alone made for its expiation. He is the author of salvation as well as the witness of salvation, the message as well as the messenger sent from heaven. In the one sense he is not sent, he is the absolute, underived origin and source; he is "the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world." In the other, he is the messenger of the covenant, the apostle of the gospel already provided, who comes "to declare the things hidden from the foundation of the world." God reveals himself in Christ by what Christ is and does rather than by what he says; but Christ proclaims himself, and his death making the sacrifice is a revelation and proclamation. Not as he makes the one atonement for sin, but as he brings that out of the counsels of eternity and makes it operative upon the world; not as the High Priest but as the Apostle of our confession, is he here set to be the pattern for the Church.

Take, for example, a few of the salient features of Christ's mission.

1. He was sent into the world to declare and apply the remedy for the disease of sin — a scientific remedy which made application of God's mind, by careful method, by infinite wisdom, to a disease which he alone could measure: "Christ crucified the wisdom of God and the power of God." He was sent to declare that One mighty to save had entered into the miserable conditions of humanity, put himself under God's law — One who knew no sin had taken upon himself the sin of the world and been made a curse for sinful man, that thus there might be, by that rational and beautiful law, vicarious sacrifice, the intervention of a stainless will and an untainted love, through which God might drive in his wedge and effect a separation between man and his heritage of sin; that there might be in the world "the irresistible might of a will unbroken and a love pure and strong moving with patience

toward the beauty of holiness, and with its unwavering eyes ever fixed on God," the source of life and health. He was sent to bring the remedy which he provided for sin — sin, the source of the poverty and the sicknesses and the distresses of the world — and not to work away at these natural results except as he wrought at the cause; and hence he was ever more anxious, when men came to him, to say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," than to say, "Rise up and walk." He was sent not as a reformer, but as a Saviour.

2. He was sent to declare that this remedy was the supernatural, purposed act of the personal God, an act out of heaven, originative and antecedent. Not up from man, but down from God, must help come. The force of the whole story of Christ's coming founds itself upon the truth that God must begin the work of salvation; that the misery of sin is its powerlessness to begin the recovery; that man cannot beget himself. Just as the secret act of God's original energy underlies our natural life, preceding, hidden, enduring, so a secret act of forgiving, life-renewing love, original, preceding, enduring, must underlie all man's regenerated life. God spoke once, "Let us make man," and breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul. God spoke again: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;" and in the power of that decree the new race of the saved finds itself existing. Not man's goodness moved the Father to send the Son, as he did, into the world, but man's sin. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." God first loved man, while he still loved sin rather than holiness, in order that by loving us He might restore the lost power of loving Him. Man could not begin until God had begun. To deny this is to be still under the law — the law of works and wages, which Paul declares unavailing. True help, Christ's sending shows, does not come along that road; not by development, but by regeneration.

3. Christ was sent to find a place for and to manifest the love of God in the world. How can holiness dwell with that which is corrupt? How can purity love the impure? The answer is, "God sent his Son into the world" to have part with man, to be identified with him. The act, then, by which God pardons, brings out of heaven the power to begin in the world the change that

justifies the forgiveness. God pardons by sending his Son into the world. He has ever been ready, has ever been crying to man through the former times, "Why will ye die?" but what is there in man on which his favor can rest? His forgiveness and love are shut up within Himself. There is no point of attachment by which to lay hold. "The love of God" has been pictured as "wandering round and round this sinful, inhospitable world, and finding no door that is not barred, and no hand that is stretched out to take it in. Therefore he sends his Son, in whom his pardon can find a road into this repellent world, into this repugnant humanity. God's expelled love, as all other doors are bolted, will open a way for itself; as no man will admit it, it will itself become man that it may find admittance." Jesus Christ is the forgiveness of God. He arrives, bringing with him into humanity the forgiving and cleansing love of the Father. There is now one spot, at least, on which the eyes of God's purity can rest. There is now, amidst the loveless herds of men, one heart on which he can pour out his love, one person who can admit the rushing power of the transfiguring Spirit. The love, purity, life of God, "long homeless and unhoused," have now found a footing within our flesh, a habitation, a temple. They had looked, and there had been no man, not one that would respond to their appeals, not one that would welcome their intimacy — no, not one. Now, there is one Son of man, in and through whom they could begin to work. Through him, a real man, the love of God, the life of God came into the race of which he became part. He was sent not only to do a work for us, but in us, and in such way that God is "holy" and "righteous" in the forgiveness of sin.

4. He was sent thus to bear witness to the truth that the salvation of the world, while *from* God, is *by* man. Therefore he became man — "the Word became flesh." This condition was necessary that he might identify himself with those in whose places he was to stand; for there must be both a revelation of God's claims upon humanity, and a recognition of those claims by that humanity itself. He must be a real man, who should live so as to bring human life in his own person up to the state appointed by God, and repair the evil brought in by sin, and become a redemptive and regenerating power in humanity. More than man he was, but he must become man and deal with actual human conduct in actual human conditions. But not only for

his distinctive personal work does he thus enter himself; he shows this to be God's plan for the world, to save man by man. From the first it had been so. It was the seed of the woman that was to bruise the serpent's head; primarily, Christ himself, but in Christ the redeemed human posterity. When he came, he submitted to the law, and took up the struggle as a struggle of the race. He illustrated this idea in various ways, notably in the parable of the leaven, where there is not only the working of the leaven originally put in, but of each particle that is leavened, till the whole is leavened. He, the Son of man, is the Son of God; but "to as many as received him gave he the right to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name." He is the preacher of righteousness; but he makes men preachers of righteousness. He brings the gospel; but he deposits the gospel, with all its institutions and appointments, with men. He is baptized with the Spirit, but he baptizes men with the Spirit. He forgives sin, but he also tells men, "Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven." They declare the pardon he brought and wrought — "a savor of life unto life or of death unto death." He comes to convert the world, but he gives to men the work of evangelizing the world. Through his name, through his continual presence, through the work of the Spirit, but by human agency, as he shall use and inspire that agency alone, salvation is to be brought to the world. The great world, — all the empires, continents, islands, many parts then undiscovered, all the generations and ages, are given in trust to men. He is the Captain of salvation, but he is to fight through his soldiers for the victory. Having chosen men to propagate his work, and made them one with himself through the Spirit, he makes them worthy to be called his own by giving them the task of overcoming the world. "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead." "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" is the gospel Christ came to bring, and which he has given to men to preach. Through a human medium this revelation came; through human means it is to be made known.

II. THE CHURCH, THE MISSIONARY.

Thus we are brought to the Christian Church, the body in which the risen Christ continues to dwell on earth, and through which he continues and extends his mission to the world. While

here in the earth as a man our Lord submitted to the limitations of the flesh and dwelt in the locality and nation in which he was born. He spent his life in that little country so strangely separate from the great empires of men. On either side of him were the millions without God and without hope. His eyes looked out on the fields white for the harvest; his heart yearned for the other sheep not of this fold; he anticipated the coming of the many from the East and the West; he knew that it was to be his death and resurrection that should liberate his activity and make him Lord of all flesh, that he was straitened till that should be accomplished, and that then the new means of action for which he prayed would be secured when the repressed secret of his coming for the world would burst its limitations of locality and nation, and go forth to work out its will with power among the nations. Therefore, having finished the part given him to do, and that depended upon his localized stay on the earth; having brought down the life of God and found a lodgment for it in the race; having united some into oneness with himself and participation in his oneness with the Father, he could ascend to resume the exercise of his divine powers in their world-wide scope through them. Therefore he prayed, "Take me out of the world: keep them in the world." He could now send men to be his instruments, the Church to be his organ, by which his own presence could find channels of entry and be distributed everywhere. Thus he had secured citadels into which from heaven he could throw his spiritual forces, means by which his special saving power could discharge itself.

To men, then, chosen men, he commits himself and his mission. He says: "As the Father hath sent me" — not merely as the Father sent me — "so send I you." He thus declares that his work is not over, though the manner of it is changed. Henceforth he is and he acts in those whom he has chosen. They are in him, sharing in the fullness of his power; he is in them, sharing in the burden of their labors; and now it is their part to bear witness, that the world may believe. They are to take the same truths he came to bring from heaven — God's remedy for sin, the love of God to man, man's work for man, Christ the sacrifice and the Saviour; to bring from another realm that which earth could not furnish, to illumine, vivify, and guide. He intrusts to them the supernatural message, and they are to bear witness to the truth, and, like him, "to seek and to save that which was lost," "to call not the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." As he

constantly appealed to the Father — "I do nothing of myself; as the Father hath taught me, I speak these things" — so they are to be able to say, "We are not as the many, corrupting the word of God; . . . but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ." He is the Light of the world; to them, he says, "Ye are the light of the world." He is the sole purifying sacrifice; but they, organized in him, become his sacrifice, by which corruption is stayed, and he says, "Ye are the salt of the earth." He says also of the diffusiveness of his work: "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man, and the field is the world, and the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom." They are the light of the world, the salt of the earth, the good seed of the kingdom sown in the world-field.

Read over the farewell address of Christ, his last prayer, and then his great commission after his resurrection, and see if every word does not obtain meaning from this view of the mission of the Church to the world. He begins the parable of the vine and its branches, but interrupts the story by demanding "fruit," and "much fruit," of the branches, before he has told what the branches are, and breaks up the figure entirely by telling them to "*go* and bear fruit." He anticipates sending them before he sends them, and says, "He that receiveth whomsoever I shall *send*, receiveth me." He asks them to live so that "*all men* know that ye are my disciples." He promises the Comforter, who shall witness and make them witnesses, going with them to "convict the *world* of sin and righteousness and judgment." He promises that they shall do greater works, because he goes to the Father; then tells them distinctly to "*go* into *all* the *world*," and "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Here is the meaning, the purpose of the Church, not to receive, but to give. It is sifted out, chosen, disciplined, purged, that, holding fast the name, the truth, the life of Christ, it may put that name, that truth, that life of Christ to its full use and exercise, to make possible, to make known, to make active, the work which Christ by his incarnation, death, and resurrection, achieved once for all. Only through man can it be laid open to man. What Christ was in the world, that the Church is; "so is every one that is born of the Spirit." To be born of the Spirit necessitates being what the Spirit is.

Whether, then, the Church shall be filled with the missionary spirit, or not, is not a question. The missionary enterprise is not

an aspect or phase of Christianity; it is Christianity itself. "Ye are my witnesses;" "Ye are the light of the world," "the salt of the earth," "the good seed" planted in the whole field.

As the agent of the Christ in the execution of the sublime purpose — supplying the spiritual need of the world — the Church is of necessity a missionary organization, endowed for this purpose, and authorized to carry the gospel to every creature. The Church now must not make the blunder of the eleven at the first, the blunder of omitting the change wrought by the resurrection, the blunder of knowing Jesus after the flesh and simply clinging to him as their special possession, of simply recording the old days when he was with them. It must grasp with them later, and with Paul, the mystery revealed in His resurrection and ascension, His lordship over the Gentiles, that which lay dormant and inoperative all the days of the flesh, whose issues, necessities, width and demands could become visible only when He had ascended up into heaven. The resurrection is no glorious end sealing a work done; it is itself the beginning, and not the end. The full work had not really begun until Jesus rose from the dead. The resurrection of Christ carries the Christian Church over a dividing line and plants it out amid the vital energies of the new dispensation. It leaves behind the exclusiveness of Judaism, it drops the distinction between Jew and Gentile — a distinction of race and blood — it deals not with man as a thing of earth, as of a particular seed, as he is through his birth in the flesh. It is dead to all these; there is now neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free. The world is the field of the Christian Church; the entire race is the object of its thought and labor. Into all the world it is sent, to subdue all the earth unto Christ, the Lord of the resurrection. And each particular church in its own measure is thus a missionary body — not merely a consecrated household — designed under the divine economy to have a specific mission to humanity; it is a messenger of glad tidings to every sinner, however far astray, whom it can by any means reach. Its command is: "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and maimed and blind and lame;" and then, that My house may be filled, "Go out into the highways and hedges and constrain them to come in." It belongs to the world for Christ's sake.

This is a cardinal obligation wrought into the very constitution

of the Christian Church at large, and of each particular organization of the Church of the resurrection; and any deviation from it, even in thought, is infidelity to the great commission given to his earthly body by the ascended Head. He bids us to go into the world bent on evangelizing all the nations. So shall we give effect to the cross of Christ and prove that Christ has not been sent in vain; so shall we uphold the honor of Christ's name; so shall his joy remain in us and our joy be fulfilled; so shall we be his disciples.

III. THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST THE POWER OF THE CHURCH FOR ITS MISSION.

A right relation having been restored between God and man, and men united to him through Christ, the impartation of the Spirit follows — power from on high; the same Spirit that was poured upon Christ in his humanity, and that he promised to give to his disciples. Christ, ascended on high, becomes the sovereign dispenser of this, the manifest energy of the very God. He had told his disciples that that Spirit was waiting to impart Himself to them, as if the wealth of God's personal power had been pent up and restrained, till it could be withheld no longer, and when the work of Christ is completed it must come forth into discovered action through those who were joined to God through Christ. It was as if God himself, through the door which the incarnation and resurrection of Christ had opened into humanity, had entered upon the scene, like a torrent whose banks had been broken down, in the full manifestation of his being. Now, through the atonement made by Christ, there need be no limit to the wealth, the "riches," as Paul again and again calls it, of his manifestation. But it is the abundance of his grace wherewith he abounds towards us, that he might show the riches of his grace to the Gentiles. This power from on high does not remain a counsel in heaven, a plan, a scheme formed by God himself, but Christ sends it in the person of the Spirit to come down out of seclusion to insert itself into the hearts of men, to press its way in, to act and move and empower. God shows in his Spirit to them that believe "the exceeding greatness of his power according to the working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead . . . and gave him to be head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all

in all." The Spirit now breathed upon men is represented as a mighty force (δύναμις) entering in, penetrating, transforming. The same Spirit had wrought his work in the world upon the Son whom he begat, whom he drove into the wilderness, whom he raised from the grave and set on high "above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named." Nor did he stay his pent-up energies there. On men, too, in Christ, that Spirit of Christ lays his hand and puts out his force. The love which caused him to pour out his strength upon the Son whom he begat, impels him to those included in oneness with the Son, and gives them the life and force and grace of the risen Lord of life.

Yes, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ, even as he chose us, having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, to the praise of the glory of his grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved, having made known unto us the mystery of his will, to the end that we should be unto the praise of his glory, having sealed us with the Holy Spirit unto the praise of his glory, having quickened us with Christ, and raised us with him, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in Christ Jesus. This is the dispensation of the grace of God now to be preached to them that are far off as well as to them that are nigh, this open mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men as it hath now been revealed in the Spirit, to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in the gospel. And to us is this grace given, as to Paul, less than the least of all saints, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, to the intent that now might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The mission of the Church, then, is the carrying out of the sending of Christ into the world — to seek and to save the lost — and he bids them to go into all the world. And if this brings immense responsibility upon them — as it does, for the work is given to men — they are to remember that the power is also bestowed, and that, Jesus Christ "being by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the

Spirit," that Spirit with all His plentitude of power abides with men.

1. Is it not time for the Church to apprehend fully its function in the world? Christ came not to found a church; but he founded the Church as the means by which the work that he, by his incarnation, death, and resurrection, achieved once for all, should be made known and be made active in the world. By being in the Church we are under strict obligations, undertake responsibilities toward the ignorance, suffering, and sin of the world. We become members of Christ's body — the hands and feet on earth of Christ in heaven. To each of us the voice of Pentecost is uttering its eternal commission, applying the words which Christ appropriated to himself:

> "The Spirit of the Lord is upon *thee*,
> Because he anointed *thee* to preach good tidings to the poor;
> He hath sent thee to proclaim release to the captives,
> And recovering of sight to the blind,
> To set at liberty them that are bruised,
> To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

2. This missionary spirit is needful to the Church for its very existence; "for whosoever would save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, shall save it." The bestowment and the distribution of God's favor are connected, and the former ceases without the latter. Dr. Duff, in his memorable sermon on missions, has put it none too strongly when he says: "The church that ceases to be evangelistic (or missionary), ceases to be evangelical; and when it ceases to be evangelical, it ceases to be a true church of Christ, however primitive and apostolic it may be in its outward form and constitution."

As surely as Christianity is the religion for all men, so surely has the Christian Church a mission to all men. She cannot rest until she has made known "the Name" to all on earth. In her times of reviving an impulse for extension is always stirred, and all that is effected by her outside re-acts with animating result within the Christian circle. "The pulse of a distant success throbs back to the heart of the living Church, and the youngest child born into the family awakes the freshest joy." Christianity st grow by being both extensive and intensive. History shows

that a missionary church is a flourishing church, and that those Christian bodies that have seen this primal obligation most distinctly, and have given themselves most zealously to its fulfillment, are precisely those which increase most rapidly, and whose future is brightest with spiritual promise.

3. What right have we to change the terms of the commission —to turn to our own use what is intrusted to us by the Master to be carried into all the world? This is to repeat the mistake of the Church in the old dispensation, who hoarded for themselves what was designed for mankind, and thought more of themselves as the depositaries of the truth than of the world for whom the truth was given, and had to have their exclusiveness and egoism shattered again and again by dispersion, that they might be planted out among the nations as witnesses, in spite of themselves, to the world, and finally lost their place in carrying out the great plan for the nations. What right has Protestant America to overlook, suspend, or indefinitely postpone the work of foreign missions, or to say that we must first thoroughly Christianize our own land, and then fulfill the command? The two must go together. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth." Indeed, the power is given to us only as it is used — the righteousness and the grace of God are revealed from faith to faith. Is not our present comparative failure at home due to our inefficiency in going into all the world? Should we be on the defensive at this late day, and like a besieged city, if we had thrown ourselves in perfect faith against "the principalities and powers and world-rulers of this darkness?" What chance would there have been for the forms of doubt and skepticism of the present if we had verified the truth in all its saving power everywhere? The farther it goes out, the fuller is the proof of its divine power, the grander the testimony to its world-wide mission. Shall we depend upon persecution, as did the disciples at first, when "they that were scattered abroad went about preaching the Word?" Shall we wait for the corrupting agencies now at work to scatter us? Shall the kingdom be taken from us and given to another?

4. Christ has provided abundant means and motives for the propagation of his gospel. He gave not only an impulse, a sentiment, a school of thought to the world, but he organized his Church, a visible and stable institution, with definite doctrine, worship and government. He made this organized society capa-

ble of acting on those without, even to greatest distances, by its example, by its acts of prayer and praise, by its personal testimony — setting it a city on a hill not to be hid. He added to this impulsion of possibility and position the positive obligation to reach into the regions beyond; and for the fulfillment of this obligation has given a transmissible message that can be spoken and sent everywhere, that its line may go into all the earth and its words to the end of the world.

The means so amply provided he has reënforced by all the purest and strongest motives to use them. The greatness and urgency of salvation as needed by every creature appeals to man's sympathy and benevolence; the memory of personal deliverance, to gratitude; the command of our Lord makes the missionary spirit a duty, imitation of his pattern a privilege, and oneness with him through the Spirit a necessity. So, too, the difficulties in the way and the greatness of the task rouse all heroism and love of achievement; the thought of the glory of God, dishonored and defied, compacts all that is most zealous in piety; trust in the promises and predictions that foretell success fire with the conviction, "God is with us," while reliance upon the Holy Spirit sets at work all the energies of eternal life.

People swarm upon us on every side — wild and degraded and ignorant people, as well as educated and polite and speculative people; but they are all needy and hungry, and to every doubting question, "Whence shall we buy bread for so many?" and to every hesitating entreaty, "Send them away to buy for themselves," the assuring answer always comes back, "Give ye them to eat;" "Freely ye have received, freely give."

5. Enough for us that the Lord sends us to preach the gospel to the whole world. The one broad basis is loyalty to him. There is weariness on the part of some with the ideas, the methods, and the appeals of missions. Everything that is large and generous in this age of intellect is subjected to keenest criticism, and we cannot expect this work to escape. We are told that missions are too expensive; that they are a failure; that they are useless to the heathen, who either contemptuously reject them, or, if they receive them, their natural development is perverted into ungainly forms. Give to these peoples civilization, commerce, intercourse with other nations, government — develop these first, and the Christian preacher can follow in their train. We might ask how soon the

commerce in alcoholic drink that goes from New England and from Old England, the most advanced of commercial peoples, or the intercourse with other nations that marks its tracks with the bleaching bones of tribes dragged toward the coast of slave-traders, will prepare the way for the Christian preacher. We thank the critics. Part of their criticism was deserved; all was needed. Our self-satisfied, self-indulgent Christianity needed it. Our one church for the rich, another for the poor— one church for the whites, another for the blacks, needed it; our Christian England and America, with the right hand laden with death-dealing drinks and drugs for far-off peoples, while the lean and laggard left carries feebly the life-giving gospel, needed to be told that "he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly," and that an enemy is doing his work.

And the whole Church needed to be summoned afresh, and to have her heroism and faith appealed to and aroused. We thank the critics. We needed to be reminded that as the Father sent Christ into the world, even so he sends us into the world, to call not righteous but sinners to repentance; to dare something for the gospel; to believe that it has power to arrest the careless, raise the fallen, to save to the uttermost — and already the fire of heroism kindles in men and women, and movement all along the line is called.

Preach Christ, and his cross and resurrection, is our answer, and now, as of old, in the track of the "beautiful feet" all goodly seeds will spring; in that preaching is the mighty "working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself." Preach Christ, who reveals the true worth and dignity of man, the sacredness of obligations and rights, the brotherhood of men as the children of God and redeemed through Christ the common Saviour, and all those great ideas which have wakened man to himself, to society, and to God, and have guided and inspired the true political and social progress of modern times. Commerce has tried its hand at saving, strong rulers have tried, education has tried, civilization has tried, all experiments have been tried — for God rules men in freedom, and progress is by a series of costly experiments; but it is power from on high which has wrought salvation and development for man in all ages of Christian history. Christ crucified is the wisdom of God and the power of God. The risen and the living Christ — in him are all our springs. Great is the mission of commerce, of civilization, of

education, of science, and we hail them all; but the missionary of the cross has the first and the greater mission, to bear abroad the Word that quickens, redeems, and saves. And we fall back in perfect faith on the broad commission of the Master, and leave the results to him. He can find a place for these peoples, and he can care for them. We preach to men because Christ died for men, and wherever a man lives, we believe that there is an immortal being for whom he yearns; and if he has made the knowledge of his gospel depend upon the ministry of man to man, be it ours to justify his ways. He claims the world; be it ours to give the world to him.

"Christ for the world we sing:
The world to Christ we bring,
With loving zeal."

The progress may seem slow. The light in touching so many points at once may be fitful, like the early sunbeams that tinge the summits apparently to fade away. But the promise of the morning is in its first glimmer, and it will not recede till the full day has come, and faith, soaring above the present, sees the glorious vision in the golden light of the future:

"Men of every tribe and tongue and people and nation made to be unto our God a kingdom and priests, and they reign upon the earth."

The Law of Productiveness in Spiritual Husbandry

ANNUAL SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

DELIVERED WEDNESDAY EVENING

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BY THE

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SERMON.

"VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, EXCEPT A CORN OF WHEAT FALL INTO THE GROUND AND DIE, IT ABIDETH ALONE: BUT IF IT DIE, IT BRINGETH FORTH MUCH FRUIT."—*John xii: 24.*

A FEW days before the close of Christ's earthly ministry, certain Greeks, present at the feast, desired to see him. The text is the startling paradox with which this desire was met. "Such words as these," says Dr. De Pressensé, "would be readily understood by the sons of Greece, who had probably assisted at the great mysteries of Eleusis, which represented the immortality of the soul under the image of a grain of wheat buried in the earth to germinate."

What a world of interest centers in a grain of wheat! The sun, the great life-giver; the earth, the great life-nourisher; the rain and air, the gentle ministers of both; all under the divine control — are doing a work with a grain of wheat which you and I not only cannot do, but cannot even understand. Science, at its best, is dumb in the presence of a corn of wheat dying that it may live. And yet, utilized by one who never studied biology or chemistry, this dying grain of wheat becomes the symbol of an eternal truth, and throws a gleam of light upon the mystery of life. Upon its *surface*, it seems to be a bold antithesis. "Except a corn of wheat die, it abideth alone: if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Barrenness, living; fruitfulness, dying. Death the condition of life; burial, of productiveness. Not so, according to *our* philosophy; but precisely this, according to the divine economy.

The law of productiveness in spiritual husbandry is the salient thought of the text. This is my theme tonight.

I. THE MEANING OF THE PRINCIPLE INVOLVED.

What truth does this enigma conceal? Summer out of winter; fertility out of decay; warmth out of ashes; victory out of defeat; hope out of despair; life out of death. Who shall unfold the mystery and make the meaning plain? Who shall tell us how it is

that "the tones of melodious death song end in more melodious tones of birth song?" Only with utmost reserve may one venture to act as interpreter of such a truth. Its hight, and depth, and length, and breadth, we may not hope to comprehend. Alone, living; fruitful, dying. This suggests a process, not a result; a means, not an end; a condition, not a consummation. The dying is ancillary, not ultimate. Doubtless the main thought is that of total self-surrender, but not as an end in itself — death, indeed, but not for the sake of death and the extinction of the powers, but death for the sake of life and the enrichment of all the powers. It is, therefore, quite at the opposite pole from asceticism, self-immolation, and all those pagan austerities which seek the multiplication of merit by the multiplication of tortures, and tend only to degradation and ruin. Whether it can be readily defined or not, it is always an ascendant movement, always means gain, always augments manhood. It is the law of self-sacrifice — prevalent everywhere — written even in nature. "It has come to be recognized," says one writer, "as the highest moral law. Altruism is but another name for it."

This answer of Jesus to the Greeks means very much more than the *mere surrender of mortal life.* It sometimes involves far less sacrifice to die than to live.

> "If but the tedious battle could be fought,
> With Sparta's heroes, at one rocky pass,
> One day be spent in dying, men had sought
> The spot and been cut down like mower's grass.
>
> "If in the heart of nature we might strive,
> Challenge to *single* combat the great power,
> Welcome the conflict! But, no; half alive,
> We skirmish with our foe long hour by hour."

Almost any one might be tempted to devote a day to becoming a hero. But this life-long skirmish with the foe is often the severest test of character, and involves the pain and sacrifice of a hundred deaths.

This recondite utterance of Jesus is the assertion of the universal law of equivalents, which makes the getting of something for nothing, impossible. Doing and being always involve cost — cost exactly graduated to the value of the result — even life itself for the highest product. There is no cheap way of success meas-

ured by the standard of righteousness; no easy bound to eminence; no dexterous method by which law can be circumvented, and a harvest secured without toil. All along the ascending scale of achievement, from the growing of a field of wheat to the redemption of a lost world, the inexorable law is expenditure proportionate to the result. We discover this law written in these words: "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." It is the behest of love, which leaves out of its reckoning all thought of return, and pours itself lavishly out for others. It is simply the doctrine of the cross, which stands as a demonstration to the ages that selfishness always ends in defeat; self-sacrifice in victory.

As the text suggests, this law pervades the vegetable kingdom. The seed dies and gives its life to the blade. The blade dies in maturing the stock. The stock dies in bringing to perfection the fruit. The verdure of this year, having fulfilled its mission and brightened the autumnal days with its departing splendors, kindly consents to die, that from its death, after the long sleep of winter, may spring up a richer, fuller, more affluent growth, to gladden the year to come.

The recent discussions in the fascinating science of biology make it clear that death is the condition of all *life of the body*. Every step taken, every blow struck, every tear shed, every thought produced, is attended by the destruction of tissue — a pulling down and building up process. So that the apostle's declaration, "I die daily," is true in a far more literal and less heroic sense than was intended when it was spoken. "All work," says Mr. Huxley, "implies waste. Every word uttered by a speaker costs him so much loss; and, in the strictest sense, he burns, that others may have light. So much eloquence, so much of his body resolved into poisonous acids and water." And so it comes to pass that we live by dying; and when we cease to die, we cease to live; and the more we die, the more we live. Life is a continuous conflagration, and how swiftly to the socket do many lives now burn!

The principle suggests the secret of all successful business enterprise. It is the risking of the seed in the hope of the harvest. The foundations of the largest buildings, the largest fortunes, and the largest characters, are laid laboriously out of sight.

In the higher realm of thought this same inexorable law of life out of death prevails. This is the condition of all mental

productiveness worthy of the name. Whatever is vital, inspiring, immortal, in literature and art, has come to us through death agonies, is stained with heart's blood. Genius is imagined, by those who lack it, to be perfect ease of accomplishment; and for that reason it is called genius. But solitude is its dwelling-place. It works alone, and eludes observation. Who, then, can ever know in what fervors, and white-heat struggles, and birth-agonies, the transcendent products of the human mind have been created and flung, with all their wealth of blessing, too often, upon an unsympathetic age? The product only is visible. The process is concealed. Think you the "Divine Comedy," "Sistine Madonna," and "In Memoriam" were jauntily tossed off, of a leisure afternoon, as the average editorial is hastily prepared every day in the year? Far enough from that. Daughters of pain they were, and, therefore, dowered with the gift of immortality.

But it is in the moral and spiritual realm that the paradox of the text finds its amplest illustration. Here, first of all, is the secret of discipleship. We must die unto sin in order to live unto holiness. The flaming sword still guards the gates of paradise, and only they enter who are willing to allow its glittering blade to pierce and slay the old, bad life of sin and selfishness.

Here, too, lies the secret of all heroism. But for this principle, there had been no martyrs, no confessors, no cloud of witnesses to compass us about. What a dead level of selfishness human history would be, unrelieved by these occasional mountain peaks of generous self-sacrifice! Happily, all along the ages there have been a few men and women who have not loved their lives unto death — those of whom the world has not been worthy, whose lives have been "like gates of steel fronting the sun," and throwing an occasional gleam of light and cheer into the abounding darkness of ignorance and sin. Beacon lights, their names are household words — part of the common heritage of the race — used as rallying cries in times that make special demands upon faith, courage, and loyalty. They are the "dead but sceptered sovereigns who rule our spirits from their urns." Well, what of them? What is their claim to this perennial honor? Simply this. They loved truth and righteousness, and country, and God, better than themselves, and had the courage of their convictions. Firm they stood when others faltered. Freely they gave, when others withheld. Truly they spoke, when others equivocated. Bravely they died,

when others surrendered. They did not think of fame, or fortune, or life, or perpetual remembrance, or anything, save duty; but they became famous, and their deeds monumental. The alabaster box of precious ointment, broken under the unerring impulse of supreme devotion to the Master, has sent its subtle perfume through all the Christian centuries. Such lives have become fecund, fruitful; and the causes for which they were laid down have become significant in proportion to the prodigality of the sacrifice. They have been

> "Not like idle ore,
> But iron dug in central gloom,
> And heated hot by burning fears,
> And dipped in baths of hissing tears,
> And battered by the dints of doom
> To shape and use!"

The head of John the Baptist, in a charger, duly delivered, according to previous contract, to Herodias' daughter, did better service than before it was cut off; for that blood cried from the ground in tones a thousand-fold more startling than the voice in the wilderness. It was better, too, for the prophet, for it let him out of prison into glory. According to the established canons of rhetoric, the address of Stephen was very incomplete. And yet no orator ever concluded a discourse with a more eloquent climax. It aroused the malignest forces of hell, and invoked the swiftest interposition of Heaven. Saul never forgot it. Its echoes are still vibrating across the centuries, adding courage to cowardice in hours of great peril. Here has always lain the strength of martyrdom. It is the one factor which the enemy fails to reckon, or else reckons on the wrong side. It is a factor of incalculable power. Death not only sets the seal of sincerity to the testimony, but it is also an irresistible appeal to all the benign forces in the universe for righteous vindication, which, sooner or later, is sure to be heard and answered.

In this surprising way, the blood of martyrs enriches whole epochs, and makes them quick with the seeds of a kindlier and more beneficent sway. "Four shillings and eight pence for fagots to burn three Lollards" is the laconic entry in an ancient day-book. That seemed, doubtless, to those who made the purchase, to be a very cheap fire, and the destruction of three Lollards a very disastrous blow to liberty. But some items have been omit-

ted from the brief entry in the ledger. The record was made too soon. That fire has not yet ceased to burn, nor will it cease, until, in its incandescent, lambent flame, all tyranny and wrong shall be consumed, and eternal righteousness flash forth as from the Shekinah of the Infinite.

"These are the living lights
That from our bold, green hights
Shall shine afar,
Till those who name the name
Of freedom, to the flame
Come, as the Magi came
To Bethlehem's star."

From the days of Stephen until now, this has been the informing spirit in all the productive epochs of the Church. Progress has come through struggle. Victory has been snatched from apparent defeat. Professor Hitchcock, speaking of the persecutions under Decius and Diocletian, says, "These were times of awful agony — the two years of Decius, and the ten years of Diocletian — when the powerful Roman empire, shutting the gates of the amphitheater, leaped into the arena face to face with the Christian Church. When those gates were opened, the victorious Church went forth, with the baptism of blood on her saintly brow, bearing a new Christian empire in her fair, white arms." And it may be added that, when this victorious Church became conscious of her newly acquired power, sought worldly aggrandizement by worldly methods, and forgot her mission — that is, tried to save her life — her beautiful garments were trailed in the dust, and her strength was gone. And this is a fair epitome of the Church's history through all the centuries.

This spirit of total self-surrender for Christ's sake and the gospel's has been strikingly characteristic of *modern missions* from the day when Drachart, the Moravian, having been told that the Eskimos of Labrador would murder him, answered, "If they will kill me, they will kill me, but *go I must*," to the day when Livingstone was found in his African hut, upon his knees, in the attitude of prayer, dead, having literally poured out his life a willing libation for the redemption of the Dark Continent.

The following utterances fairly represent the spirit of modern missionaries. The heroic Golat, of the French mission to the Senegal, left these farewell words: "Do not be discouraged if the first

laborers fall in the field. Their graves will mark the way for their successors, who will march past them with great strides." The last words of Adam McCall, of the African mission, were these: "Lord, I gave myself, body and soul and spirit, to thee. I consecrated my whole life to thy service; and now if it please thee to take myself instead of the work which I would do for thee, what is that to me? *Thy* will be done." Melville Cox asked to have this inscription on his tombstone: "Though a thousand fall, let not Africa be given up." Paton's reply, when told that he would surely be eaten by the cannibals whom he went to save, was this: "I have only once to die, and I am willing to leave the time and place and means in the hands of God, whom I seek to honor, whether in life or in death." This was most conspicuously the temper of the lamented Neesima. This was the spirit of the heroic Dr. and Mrs. Whitman, who saved to the republic the mighty empire of the Northwest, and so made our meeting what it is here tonight This is the informing, inspiring characteristic of modern missions.

It is also true that days of bitter persecution have been days of great progress — sometimes the greatest — as in the case of the Armenians of Turkey, and the martyr church of Madagascar. This is the established law of conquest in Christ's kingdom. "Except the corn of wheat die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." This law has never been repealed, though it has often been forgotten. Secular and selfish methods have often been adopted, to end only in defeat. A church wearing the insignia and adopting the strategy of earthly kingdoms is a caricature of the true Church, and an ally of the devil. The true Church, the living, conquering Church, recognizing the real meaning of its blood-stained banner, holds itself evermore ready to die. Just here lies any propagative power it may have.

II. OBSERVE, IN THE SECOND PLACE, A FRESH BAPTISM INTO THIS SPIRIT OF FULL DEVOTEDNESS OF LIFE TO CHRIST IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR.

This law of productiveness demands instant recognition and enforcement. In this connection we discover the *one unrealized* factor in the great missionary movement of the century. The fields are white already to harvest. The resources of the Church, humanly speaking, are sufficient. The outfit and equipment are

complete. Of organization there is enough. Where is the *missing factor?* What detains the coming of the chariot of God? What is the latent, unused force that needs liberation in order to become almost omnipotent? It is this—the resistless force of consecrated human life and personality. Here lies the secret of rapid and successful conquest. Let a few considerations be mentioned that give saliency to this need.

1. *In deference to its original design, the Church needs to come into this range of high incentives.* Here, and here alone, it finds its proper environment. True to spiritual conceptions of its mission, and adhering to spiritual methods of conquest, it has all the resources of heaven at its command. Divested of earthly power, it will be invested with heavenly power. To its anointed vision the mountains will be full of horses and chariots of fire. The stars in their courses will be its helpful allies. Angels will become its ministering spirits. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Untrue to such conceptions and venturing to accept a lower standard, it is shorn of its strength and becomes an agency of weakness, if not of wickedness. Even a small body of disciples, thoroughly responsive to the divine leadership, in the spirit of lofty, uncalculating self-forgetfulness, would be invincible, verifying the subtle arithmetic of heaven, which declares that "one shall chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight," and disclosing the fallacy of the vulgar arithmetic of earth, which avers that the heathen populations are increasing seventy times as fast as they are converted. For it has been most pertinently said: "The gain of three millions of Christians in a century from nothing is far greater than the gain of 200,000,000 from the 800,000,000 previously living. The one is a *creation*, the other is a progression." Less mathematics and more faith would help us in all our Christian work. The words of Wesley are suggestive: "If I had three hundred men who feared nothing but God, hated nothing but sin, and were determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified, I would set the world on fire."

2. *In the interests of self-preservation, this spirit needs rekindling in the Church.* While the Church has been wonderfully enriching every department of secular life with its redeeming influence, it has, likewise, felt the reaction of this resistless secular life upon itself. Its danger now is suffocation in the stifling atmosphere of worldliness. It is a remark of Mr. Bryce, speaking of this country,

"that the atmosphere is over full of all that pertains to material progress." The peril is measureless; the temptation is analogous to that which assailed the Lord Jesus in the wilderness. To apply to it a phrase of Carlyle, used in another connection, "Its life is an internecine warfare with the time spirit." If the Church comes off, as its great Head did, *victorious*, it will be through its refusal to listen to any bland proposals of compromise. It is a remark of Professor Hitchcock, "that Christianity is embarrassed by being obliged to apologize for Christendom." The Church's safeguard against being overcome by the world lies in overcoming the world. Simply on the defensive, it will be destroyed. It must conquer or die, and it must die to conquer.

The words of ex-President Seelye are full of weight: "It is not simply a question for the Church whether missions are a helpful means for the salvation of the world. Her own salvation is intimately involved in the missionary cause. Indifference *within* the Church to the conversion of the world begets infidelity *outside*, and overwhelms the Church with reproaches which she has no means to repel. The missionary spirit is the normal development of the Christian life." Says another writer of large experience and study: "The future safety of the Church depends upon her missionary advancement. The condition of the heathen world is the scandal that overshadows the fame of Jesus."

It is not infidelity we have to fear, nor the organized resistance of heathenism, nor the hostility of the human heart, but inertia within the Church. "The Moslem power sprang from the ashes of an extinguished missionary fire; the Moslem power could never have arisen in the days of a living Church."

3. *This fine, self-forgetting temper is needed now, in order to reassure the faith and courage of believing souls.* Days of fiery trial are before us. A virile type of Christian faith is demanded — tough, resonant, resilient, aggressive. The situation abroad, at present, is briefly indicated by two words — *opportunity*, *opposition*. Naturally, the strengthening of the Christian forces strengthens those of the other side; Christianity is becoming sufficiently powerful and aggressive in many places to invite increasing hostility. The battle now is not so much with carnal weapons as with the more subtle agencies of evil. "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of the darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in

the heavenly places." The conflict is more and more in the realm of ideas. The school, the press, the neutral-tinted religionist, the diplomat, and the polished man of the world are on the ground, actively arrayed against the Christian faith. The old religions are bracing themselves for a fresh collision, while Christianity is a child in death-grapple with them. Increasing jealousy of foreign influence is seen in some quarters. The secular blessings of the gospel have so outrun the spiritual in some of those dark lands, that the latter are less eagerly desired now. It is a testing time. It will require the heroic quality of Christian faith to stand against all counterfeits, whether from this or other lands; the faith that knows how to die, but not how to surrender. When the aged Horatius was told that his son had fled from the combat which decided the supremacy between Alba and Rome, and, seeing his indignation, they asked him what his son should have done against three, the old man replied, "He should have died." And if, at such a time as this, we hold our peace, or prove unequal to the critical exigency before us, may not deliverance come from another quarter?

Dr. George Smith, Secretary of the Foreign Missionary Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, speaking, at the London Conference, of the utter spiritual barrenness of the eighteenth century, said "that the few godly people who sought to evangelize the world had to leave the Church practically, as the Pietists, Moravians, and Methodists." God forbid that a similar alternative should ever become necessary in this century. What an awful doom to an individual, a church, or a nation, to be denied the august priviiege, through indifference, or sordidness, or unbelief, of helping to usher in the glorious day of Christ's reign on earth! Opportunity neglected is necessarily lost. Power abused is forfeited. An agency unequal to its task invites defeat. The candlesticks have heretofore been removed out of their place; they may be again; they will be when they no longer aid in the diffusion of light. The Church is now under a peremptory challenge to gird itself for the battle, to put on the whole armor of God — the armor of light — that, having done all, it may stand and repel all the fiery darts of the adversary.

4. *It may be added, once more, that this spirit needs cultivation among us in order to equalize the standard of Christian living at home and abroad.* No bi-metallic currency is permissible in the spiritual world. There is only one recognized coin of this higher realm —

the pure gold of Christian character. I have sometimes thought that we deal in a metal less refined than our brethren in foreign lands, as it has been less in the refining fire than theirs.

Concerning the missionaries of our Board, I am sure the remarks of Dr. Robert N. Cust at the London Conference are not applicable, when he says, "I cannot conceal from myself that, with the softening of the present century, there has come a relaxation of the fiber of our missionaries." The fiber of *our* missionaries seems to me to be tough and compact, without one whit of flabbiness in it. A noble body of men and women they are, quite worthy of the splendid succession into which they have come, gracefully wearing the mantle of departed heroes and saints, eminent examples of the spirit of the text. All honor to them! Their lives are to me a perpetual inspiration and rebuke. They are doing their utmost to realize the New Testament conception of Christian character in their fields of labor, and in doing this their lives are the most engaging factor. In a certain fine aroma of daily living — which is a sweet-smelling savor in the thought of Him who owns the sacrifice — am I wrong in thinking that our brethren abroad surpass us? It seems to me the tide rises higher on the foreign shore than on ours. Into all the crevices and bays and estuaries and open spaces of their being it seems to push, excluding the world and filling their lives with loving, self-denying service.

The advantage ought to be decidedly with us; for whatever be the subtle forces that lift the tides, they are a thousand-fold stronger in Christian than in Pagan lands. Paton speaks of "people who try to evangelize the world while sitting in easy chairs at home." It is to be hoped that this little bit of sarcasm does not apply to us. Such lassitude and laziness as easy chairs suggest are strikingly inconsonant with the intensely energetic temper of our people in all things else. It cannot be; and yet it is to be feared that we are not in the most strenuous and militant mood now. To say that the Church, as a body, is throwing itself with an abandon of self-sacrifice into the exigent service of evangelizing the world, would be an exaggeration. There is some color to the current remark that the Church is only "playing at missions." There is a certain infection of daintiness that does not suggest heroism. The missionary spirit gets the chills rather easily, and maintains a somewhat variable temperature.

Another sentiment from the lips of Mr. Cust, on the same occasion, will gain general assent, when, referring to those at home, he speaks of "more self-consecration, more entire abnegation of self, more sacrifice of pride, prejudice, and domestic comfort, more casting down of cherished idols, more laying of ourselves on His altar and submitting to His will." As far as possible (and that perhaps is not very far) ought we to be at one with those who go abroad, in any sacrifices made for Christ's sake — one in the fellowship of suffering. It is easy for me to believe that any depression of spirit they may feel is not so much when in their fields of labor as, upon their return from their scanty way of life and self-denying toil, to see the affluence and ease which we seem to covet and enjoy, even in the face of the trumpet-tongued and austere calls for help. Not envy, but sorrow, fills their hearts, because work into which their very lives have, with a self-forgetting lavishness, been poured, can be allowed to suffer, and because, amid such opulence, the word "retrenchment" can ever be allowed articulate utterance. When success foretokens curtailment, and prosperity invites contraction, the best incentives to earnest prayer and faithful labor are gone. Why plan stations to be abandoned, and train laboriously a native ministry that cannot be employed? Brethren, let us prefer death to such reproach. If we are willing to die, the reproach will be taken away. More than this; the type of piety at home, in these days of increasingly close neighborhood, will be the type of piety abroad. I remember to have heard the fear expressed by an earnest missionary from Japan, lest the easy-going religious life of this land should find its way across the sea to that island. Brethren, we are setting the fashion for the heathen world. There is no Occidental, no Oriental, but a universal, Christ, and all nations that accept him will, by a law of stable equilibrium, maintain eventually much the same standard of Christian thought and devotion. We are furnishing the mold in which the nations transformed by the gospel will almost certainly be cast, giving the key-note of new movements in decaying dynasties, establishing the norm of Christian empires and civilizations. Let it be the pattern shown on the mount and perfected at the cross.

5. *An adequate supply of men and money would be the swift and early fruitage from a soil enriched by the tears of sacrifice.* There is a fancy of the Greeks that the clay of which man was made was moistened not with water, but with tears. Men and

money; these are the foci of the ellipse around which all statement and argument move — the postulate and the climax of the most impassioned appeals. Of both, the Church has an abundant supply. The resources of language will scarcely admit of a more urgent or persuasive plea. The logic is unanswerable. The sensitive spirit shrinks from the pain of listening to such importunities. A feeble response is not the fault of the appeal. That needs no new emphasis, no amendment. Especially true is this in relation to money. The failure is not with the address, but with those addressed. It has been one of the distinctions of this Board that it has reckoned among its friends a large number of men and women, in the course of its honored history, who have not *waited* to be asked for their offering of children or money, to be devoted to the missionary cause. The gift of their choicest — that which cost them most — was in their daily thought and toil. They could not be restrained. For them perpetual solicitations would have been as *impertinent* as they would have been unnecessary. Farnsworth, Gates, Jones, whose faces and fellowships we sorely miss this evening, were among that goodly company. When every member of our churches is willing to die in order to live, is actuated by the spirit which allured the Lord Jesus to Gethsemane and the cross, it will become necessary, as at the building of the tabernacle, to restrain their liberality. Says Mr. Paton: "In all my addresses I strove to win the believer to a more consecrated life. For I knew that if I succeeded in these higher aims, the money would be freely laid upon the altar, too." Too much of our effort is expended at the wrong end of the lever. Too often we toil at the point of sorest disadvantage. If we first present ourselves a living sacrifice unto the Lord, all the rest follows. A vivid realization, a thoughtful adoption of the New Testament conception of stewardship, which is essentially the doctrine of the text, would fill all the treasuries, and make special appeals almost an impertinence. Just here, to be somewhat personal, is the best opportunity afforded most of us for compliance with the sentiment of the text — that is, dying that we may bring forth much fruit. Die as to the pocket; die as to this mad, delusive and consuming race for wealth; die as to the ease and luxury into which money beguiles the unheroic soul; die as to the passion for mere accumulation and possession — the miser's nemesis; nail to the cross the unhallowed lust for gold, and then live a large, fruitful, generous, glad, blessed

life of Christ-like service for others. Promise of exemption from trials does not attract, but repels, heroic souls. Young men, worthy of holding commissions in a service which might well be coveted by angels, will not be attracted by minimizing the hardships involved. Says Dr. Pierson, "When the martyr spirit is quenched, the missionary spirit will be found to have gone out in the same dying flame." In proportion as our appeals are kept on the high elevations, may swift responses for men and money be anticipated. The gifted Dr. Duff was responsive to appeals pitched in this sublime key when in reply to the committee he said: "Here am I; send me. The work is most arduous, but it is of God, and must prosper. Many sacrifices painful to flesh and blood must be made, but not any corresponding to the glory of winning souls to Christ. With the thought of this glory I feel myself almost transported with joy. Everything else appears to fall out of view as vain and insignificant. The missionary life! Ah! an archangel would come down from the throne, if he might, and feel himself honored to give up the felicities of heaven for a season, for the toils of a missionary's life. The missionary's work! The work of a minister at home is but the lighting of a family lamp to the causing of the sun to rise upon an empire that is yet in darkness. The missionary's grave is far more honorable than the minister's pulpit." That is the outburst of a soul enamored of the spirit of sacrifice for Christ's sake.

6. *But, of all the fruit which would be garnered, were we willing to die, the most precious, the most satisfying, would be a great harvest of souls.*

This is the consummation of all sacrifice. For such fruit as this, many, many hearts in all lands are eagerly longing, even as Christ longs to see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. Distinctly may be now heard the angel of God crying with a loud voice, "Thrust in thy sickle and reap; for the time has come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe." Truly the reaping time seems to be at hand. Almost a century of seed-sowing has been done. And the fructifying element in that seed has been human lives. "The good seed are the children of the kingdom." How lavishly that precious seed has been scattered! but, thank God, not in vain! The work of preparation has been patiently, laboriously done. There are now tokens everywhere of the coming dawn. Almost in sight is the promised land. The old faiths are

waning. Said Dr. Post, of the Syrian Protestant College, before the London Conference, "Fetichism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Brahminism, are by no means eradicated and conquered, but I believe the decadence of these religions has already begun, and progressed far towards consummation; and I believe it will not be a single generation, or I hope not many generations, before they shall become a thing of the past." The fullness of time for a mighty coming in spiritual power of the world's Christ is at hand. The call from China for a thousand men in five years is significant.

The Word of God is widely circulated. Large expectancy prevails. Precious revivals are in progress. Young men and women in the schools at home are deeply in earnest. Those longest upon the field interpret the signs of the times as being full of promise. In the stirring appeal from the Shanghai Conference, they speak of "the vast and ripening harvest," and say that "the promise of ingathering is yearly brightening." Speaking a while ago in New York, Bishop Thoburn, thirty years in India, said, "We are nearer the heart of the heathen world today than you are near the heart of New York." Why does His chariot so long delay its coming? God calls, Christ pleads. The Holy Spirit continues to make intercessions with groanings that cannot be uttered. The Word is still surcharged with power. There is but one neglected factor — a Church not yet wholly consecrated to the Master's service; not wholly obedient to his dying command. The day that witnesses that full espousal will soon witness the victory. "The only department of human enterprise that does not seem to feel the quickening pulse of the nineteenth century is the missionary work of the Church, the noblest enterprise of all the ages, and most needing and inspiring a consecrated enthusiasm."

When you and I know what it means to pour out our souls unto death for others, to bear them as an unceasing burden on our hearts, to invest in them until it costs, until virtue goes out of us, identifying ourselves with them in their need as Moses did himself with his people, and Paul himself with his kinsmen, then will much fruit appear. That will be love's conquest. You remember how the cobbler missionary, Carey, before he left his bench, drew upon leather or brown paper a rude map of the world; and then as he pointed to the map, and his fingers rested on the vast areas given over to darkness and death shade, he would say, "These are pagan, and these are pagan, and these, and these, and these —

until, overcome with emotion, he wept aloud." So in that consecrated soul did the corn of wheat die and bring forth the first fruit of modern missions. It was love — the most fecund and prolific force in the universe — love for Christ and lost men — that prompted the generous sacrifice.

It is worthy of notice that whenever anything of supreme value is transpiring, somebody is dying. And how hallowed does that spot of earth become where man has died for his fellowman!

> "They say that in some spots
> Where martyrs died or holy men once met
> Under the watchful sky to worship God,
> Sounds sweet as heaven are heard in every hour,
> Rising like fragrance from the sod, as if
> The soil had drunk the notes of holier days,
> And loved at times to give them out again,
> Sweetened with age, rich with unearthly peace."

When will Africa be redeemed? Not when its territory has all been parceled out to ambitious civilized nations; not when the arts and sciences and commerce have entered its borders; not even when the Bible has been put into its manifold languages and dialects — but when enough good men, like Livingstone, and Hannington, and Kemp, and Pinkerton, and Root, and like fifty others in Sierra Leone, within twenty years, have died there, thus having purchased the preëmption of the continent for Christ; and when, moreover, we who remain at home are enough burdened about Africa to die in spirit with them. John Williams and his young associate Harris were both clubbed to death, and eaten, within a few minutes of their landing on Erromango. Referring to this early martyrdom, Paton says: "Thus were the New Hebrides baptized with the blood of martyrs; and Christ told the whole Christian world that he claimed these islands as his own. His cross must yet be lifted up where the blood of his saints has been poured forth in his name." It is as if the standard-bearer, falling in the fight, were to give the colors to his comrade, with the request that he press forward to victory. When Headley Vicars fell, leading a charge in the Crimean war, with these words upon his dying lips — "This way 97th" — the 97th was invincible. The intrepid spirit which that courageous leader was that moment breathing out, his devoted followers must that moment have been breathing in, and, shall we add, multiplying a thousand-fold? Men like to follow the

leader who dies in front of them in the thickest of the fight. They like to take the standard from his dying hand and plant it on the ramparts of the enemy.

III. THE REALIZATION OF THIS PRODUCTIVE ENERGY IN OUR OWN LIVES.

This is the supreme consideration of the evening. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." What is required of ME in meeting the conditions here imposed?

Intensely personal is this question. It cannot be otherwise. All the great crises in human experience must be met *alone*. Most of all is dying a solitary act. There is no comradeship in that battle. In the secrecy of the closet and of the heart must any acceptable oblation be made. There, alone, must you and I taste the cup from which we shrink — and from drinking it, we do instinctively shrink. It is not pleasant to die. To become at once victim and executioner, and voluntarily to allow this comfortable, congested, self-centered life of ours to be nailed to the cross that it may thus be re-created, exalted and empowered for a nobler and diviner service, is far enough from being the habitual aspiration of our souls. Actually to realize this Christ-like ideal would be, for some of us, the enactment of a tragedy, or, at least, the inauguration of a revolution and the reëstablishment of a new order. Very likely, in cases not a few, the style of living, methods of business, conduct of social affairs, plans for travel, intentions concerning the children, expenditures of time, strength and money, would require radical readjustment, with the distinct and thoughtful purpose of touching a higher level, and holding the reconstructed life, with something of sturdiness, to a more worthy and more rewarding standard of action, under the inspiration of the cross. Men hold themselves ready to make any sacrifice for worldly advantage. What hecatombs of valuable lives are voluntarily found

> "In the Temple of Mammon,
> Where is offered up
> To Gain — the Master idol of the Realm —
> Perpetual sacrifice!"

Upon that unhallowed altar millions lay their avaricious and sterile lives every year, in a bewildering passion for gold. We have an altar, too, consecrated by the blood of Him who suffered without the camp; and we do but follow in his footsteps when gladly to that sacred shrine we bring our costliest offering — even life itself. Ignatius stood in the arena, and as the lions rushed upon him, he calmly said: "I am grain of God. I must be ground between the teeth of lions, that I may make bread for His people." The arena and the lions are incidents of a past age. But is there no place for Ignatius still? Yes. God's people still suffer with a hunger which can only be appeased at just that cost. And martyrdom is still the guerdon of great souls.

This spirit, which has in it the promise of large fruitfulness, will come to be ours in proportion as the highest ends and highest motives are set and held distinctly before the soul. It is a suggestive remark of Bishop Westcott, "that self-sacrifice will enable us to take possession of a region of being which answers to the capacities of the soul." That region ought to be occupied and cultivated. Ends and motives commensurate with the capacities of the soul will develop and empower these capacities.

A correction of the perspective of life may be necessary to bring the most inspiring and productive considerations within the range of vision. We are apt to fore-shorten the picture until it lacks those alluring and beckoning vistas that reach on into the eternal world, and so becomes commonplace and colorless. Let the horizon be enlarged. Push back this sensuous environment. Let things unseen and eternal be brought into the foreground. The storage of the best motive power for the improvement of *this* world is pavilioned in the world to come. You find it when you find the hidings of God's power.

Moses endured as seeing Him who is invisible, and so did all the other saints who are enrolled in the same immortal fellowship. They felt the power of an indissoluble life. There is a legend concerning Moses, that when he was three years old, the princess put him in her father's arms, and he, to please her, set the crown on the child's head; but Moses threw it off, and springing to the ground, trod on it. This legend of his childhood is a feeble picture of a tremendous fact in his manhood. The refusals of life! The conditions of heroic achievements are the same today. "Faith, which is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things

not seen," is now, as in the olden time, the secret of every memorable conquest in the history of the Church of God. It appropriates the same transcendent motives now that stirred the hearts of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, confessors, and martyrs, and continues the bright succession.

In my more recent study of the Acts of the Apostles, a few salient facts have especially arrested my attention. They are such as these: On the one hand, the prevalence of paganism in its vilest form, concentrated in great cities; the most persistent organized opposition, both in Church and State, to the gospel; the most relentless persecution; the powers of evil rampant and full of rage; all the recognized forces in society against truth and righteousness. On the other hand, a few humble but eager disciples, every hour exposed to death, but also every hour full of a nameless joy; the amazing power of the Scriptures; the boldness of utterance; the leadership of Jehovah as if he were present in person on the field with proffers of instantaneous help; and a steady, rapid, triumphant march, apparently quickened by obstacles, to victory. In this book the name of the Triune God, in some form, is more than three hundred times mentioned; so that it is really a history of *God's* movement through Asia Minor from the year 33 to 63 A. D., or, The Thirty Years' War of Jehovah against Paganism.

The old-time history has a modern parallel. Practically the same conditions exist today. If in upon the Christian Church could be borne this hour the same vivid sense of man's lost condition, of Christ's love, of the gospel's power, of the Spirit's presence, of the efficacy of prayer, of the communion of saints, of the divine interposition, of the urgency of the call to immediate repentance, that filled and fired the hearts of the apostles, triumphs far greater and grander than those inaugurated on the day of Pentecost would salute our expectant vision. The *secret* of such victories is disclosed to us in the words of the apostle Paul when he says: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live. And yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And these: "But I hold not my life of any account, as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." The productive power of such a life is beyond all calculation, because it has in it the factor of infinity. When *we* are willing to die, then Christ

at once lives in us, and "of his fulness all we receive, and grace for grace." "I might have my hand full of truth," said Fontenelle, "and I open only my little finger." When the Church might have its hand full, it stretches timidly out its little finger; and that, too, in the presence of Him whose supreme delight it is to give, and who, in the plenitude of his grace, puts all the resources of heaven at our command. How long, pray tell me, can we who profess to love the Lord Jesus Christ listen, unmoved, to such utterances as the following? "Unless reënforced soon, our kingdom will be taken from us." "The effort must be swift and earnest." "Souls are perishing for lack of the Lord's money." "The work demands expansion, not retrenchment." "The times are fully ripe for an onward movement." "Staggering alone under a crushing burden." "We know not how to meet the emergency." "The work calls for enlargement, the Board for retrenchment." We have assembled here this week in Christ's name to frame the response which shall be sent across the seas, in answer to these almost despairing cries for help. Brethren, what shall our answer be? When they ask for bread, shall we give them a stone? When "yes" means success, and "no" failure, shall we say "*No?*' There never was a moment in the history of this Board more heavily freighted with responsibility than the present. It may well appall us. It may well humble us. It may well drive us to our knees. It may well embolden and inspire us. The welfare of all our missionary work seems to be pivoted largely on the purposes and action consummated here. This is the supreme hour to devise great things; to rise, in the might of a new-born faith and hope and enthusiasm, to a hitherto unattained hight of self-sacrificing devotion to our Lord and Master; to plan things on a scale of *maximum*, and *not of minimum*, achievement; to accept these majestic auguries of the breaking day as from the Lord himself, and greet them with a prodigality of surrender and effort worthy of Him who honors us with a service so sublime. For a pagan emperor to fiddle while the capital of his empire was burning was an innocent diversion in comparison with the conduct of Christian embassadors, under a divine and strenuous commission to evangelize the world, if they hesitate, and doubt, and dally, and delay, and solace their consciences with pleasant lullabies, while millions of immortal souls are every year going down to eternal death. Brethren, the Church of God is postponing the millennium, when its supreme

business is to hasten its coming. One can almost seem to hear the Saviour say of it, as of the fig tree in the vineyard, "Lord, let it alone this year also." Fruit, fruit, much fruit! For this the heart of our ever-living Saviour unceasingly longs. For this he patiently, lovingly waits, before he speaks the dreadful word of doom, "Cut it down." I am sure there is no such dreadful word reserved for us to hear. Let us rather hope that Pentecostal blessings are at hand. The closing years of this century, tremulously alive with interest in missions, ought to be signalized by a great ingathering of souls to the praise and glory of Him who sends the reapers forth, and crowns their labors with his benediction.

Under God, it is for us who are here this evening to say what the harvest shall be — whether thirty, sixty, or an hundred fold. The Congo River, whose sources are hidden among the mountains of Africa, in its swift descent over the rocks and terraces and precipices that obstruct its pathway to the coast, accumulates such tremendous volume and momentum, that, forming no delta at its mouth, with resistless, propulsive force, it pushes its assertive way three hundred miles out into the open sea. God grant that, during these hallowed days of fellowship and prayer, we, dear brethren, may be lifted by his quickening Spirit to such mountain tops of love and sacrifice that the hitherto sluggish current of our lives, augmented and energized, may carry us by a wind of irresistible divine compulsion, quite beyond the narrow continent of self, out into the dark, raging sea of sin and death, in whose remorseless waves so many of our fellowmen are almost hopelessly immersed, and constrain us to be to them the swift, willing, eager bearers of the message of eternal life! Help us this very hour, O Christ, to receive the Holy Ghost!

FELLOW WORKERS WITH GOD

ANNUAL SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

DELIVERED TUESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 13, 1891

AT PITTSFIELD, MASS.

BY THE

REV. EDWIN B. WEBB, D.D.

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SERMON.

"FOR WE ARE LABORERS TOGETHER WITH GOD." — *1 Cor. iii: 9.*

BRETHREN AND FRIENDS, I beg your attention to a humble effort to open and enforce this truth: "For we are laborers together with God;" or, as the Revised Version reads, "For we are God's fellow workers."

The great apostle is addressing an argument to men among whom are envyings and strifes and divisions. His aim is manifestly to lift them up out of their weak, carnal, and contentious state. And this he will do by setting before them wisely the sacred and supreme relationship of the service in which he, as a minister, and all other true believers are enlisted — a service in which every man's work, and the material which he brings, are to be tested so as by fire — a relationship so exalted and exacting that every man's wisdom and ways must be rejected, and God's will and God's ways alone be accepted. Confusion among the planets of our solar system there surely would be if influences from the earth should prevail. Controlled by the sun, the center and support of all, there is the ever celestial sweep and song of a perfect harmony. One with God in service, men cannot be at odds among themselves.

This is the supreme hight to which men can rise. But, in accordance with the divine promises, good men and great workers in all ages have realized something of this union. Paul and Barnabas, recounting their work among the Gentiles, declare what *God* has done by them, and in his second Epistle to the Corinthians the strength and cogency of Paul's appeal spring from this fellowship: "As though *God* did beseech you by us;" "*We*, then, as workers together with *God*, beseech you;" "For *we* are God's fellow workers."

I. First of all let us consider a little *the fact affirmed in our text*: "*We are God's fellow workers.*"

God is the great, original, primary worker. He created the light; he arched the skies; he reared the mountains; he scooped the hollow for the seas; he planted the race of man in Eden; and he — "Behold, God is my salvation" — he it is who would restore the race, redeemed and reconciled, to himself.

And God continues to work. We are so fixed in the grooves of cause and effect, so persuaded of the omnipotence of law, that we need to remind ourselves sharply of the supreme present agency, and living, personal sovereignty of God. We have no more power in ourselves to continue life than we have to commence it. "In Him we live and move and have our being." No created thing is self-sustaining. Renewed, replenished it must be continually, or fall back into non-existence. Hence the Psalmist's devout confession, "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created. Thou renewest the face of the earth." The muscles of the body have no power to move themselves. No more has the created, material universe power to move itself. "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith; or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?" The same Spirit that created, empowers. From his hand, unseen, is poured continuously the oil that keeps alive every lamp that burns.

But while there is much with which man has nothing to do, it must be added, on the other hand, there is much into which man, the child of God, is permitted to enter and to take part with his Father. God created Eden, the perfection of material beauty and life; but, while continuing to renew its vital forces, he took Adam into partnership with him, so far as tilling the ground and gathering the harvests are concerned. And so always and everywhere, spiritually as well as materially, tending and dressing the vines, planting and reaping the harvests — this is a work committed to man, while God gives the increase. Wisdom and love are combined in the method which aims to save man by the agency of man. The great Hebrew leader and lawgiver was sent with this assurance: "See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, to speak unto him whatsoever I shall command thee." The prophets were sent under the solemn injunction, "Son of man, speak *my* word to the people."

It is often said that God can convert the world without the

help of man. No doubt he can. He can burn without fire, and grow a harvest without seed. But he chooses to burn with fire, to grow a harvest from man's sowing, and to save man by man; and it savors not of regard for the prerogatives of the throne, nor of a wise concern for the welfare of man, but only of cold unbelief and spiritual indifference, to talk of leaving human salvation to God and the angels. In ancient times altars and idols were broken down by human hands. In the days of miracles the Christian religion was advanced by heroic endeavor and patient endurance.

Among the significant and memorable things spoken by Jesus after his resurrection is this: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." Jesus is the supreme apostle. He became man that he might offer God's mercy to man. And all other missions, that of apostles and ministers and missionaries, are included in the mission of Jesus, and for the accomplishment of his mission in the world. At the beginning of this mighty redemptive movement is God the Father. He sends the Son, and the Son in the prosecution of his mission sends the disciple. All salvation is from God, and all the saved return to him; while man, chosen and renewed, becomes a partner in the gracious work. Called from his prayers and his vision on the housetop, Peter went with the three men to Cæsarea, but in his going he recognized and confessed the presence and partnership of God: "What was I," is his defense, "what was I, that I could withstand God?" And Paul, going forth under that incisive summons, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee," testified, out of an experience perilous and painful but steadfast, "having obtained help of *God*, I continue."

So all great Christian workers. Just this we want in our meditations tonight; just this, in all the missionary enterprise of the day, to take in the profound meaning of our text; not a figure of speech, but an inspiring truth; not a stroke of rhetoric, but a vital reality. Various causes combine to relegate the supernatural to the domain of the superstitious. With too many of us, it is true that the risen Christ holds our eyes no more, waking and tearful, with that radiant form divine. His promised presence is a matter of opinion, not of experience. The ancient Church, moving with the column of cloud and of fire, reading on its dark folds and in its bright flame, "Lo, I am with you," could celebrate victory

before the battle. God with us; that is divine condescension; but our impotence makes it necessary. Fellow workers with God, are we sometimes dull and drowsy and indifferent? Is not this the cause, forgetfulness of this exalting and inspiring relation? Consciously working with him, time and talents, powers and possessions, liberty and life, go easily into the work; and such a partnership must succeed.

II. But what is it in which we are to have part? Laborers together with God, *what is the labor?* Fellow workers with God, *what is the work?* Let the great missionary apostle answer: "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell, and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself." This also is the mystery of his will and the purpose of his grace, "that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." Jesus came down from heaven to do the will of Him that sent him. And being in the sanctuary, he received the book from the minister, and found the place where it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." And having read, he announced the fulfillment of the prophecy in himself, words of wondrous grace falling from his lips and justifying the claim. Standing on Olivet, ready to return, he sent forth his disciples to complete the work of his mission, under this great commission, "Go, disciple the nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Teaching them what I have taught you! an exhaustive ideal; a comprehensive work, including the whole man, the inner and the outer, the individual and the social, the material and the spiritual. Not a conference with pagan worshipers — not Christ tolerated on a level with Buddha and Confucius and Mohammed — but Christianity supreme, and Christ enthroned on the undivided loyalty of believing souls. "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." Fellow workers with God, this is the work — moral, spiritual, supernatural in its character; vast, infinite, eternal in its relations. Human genius halts and wonders at the conception of it; human

power stumbles and fails in devising means for the accomplishment of it. God's work it is; God's greatest, grandest work, involving the resources of his wisdom and the wealth of his love.

III. Next, in the third place, let us consider the *conditions* of becoming fellow workers with God. A service so peculiar cannot be shared except by a peculiar people. How can two *walk* together except they be agreed? How can two *work* together except they be agreed?

(1) *The first condition of sharing this work is vital union and sympathy with God.* The natural man is excluded, "because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be."

There was a time when Paul was anything but a co-worker with God. He antagonized his purposes; he hated his Son; he massacred the disciples. Until the risen Christ met him on the Syrian plain, in a light above the brightness of the noonday sun, he was an alien and an enemy, as is every child of Adam. Then and there he was changed; renewed by the Holy Ghost and transformed into a man of prayer and implicit obedience. Then and there union and sympathy took the place of alienation and enmity. And essentially the same change must be wrought in every one of us before we can work with God. No artificial semblance of a spiritual life will do. No fashionable veneering of the old man will do. Put off the old man with his lusts, we must. Put on the new man, who, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, *we must.* In this way only can we secure that union and sympathy with God which are essential to coöperation in this divine work.

And Jesus, to whom we look for encouragement as well as example, assumes that we may attain unto this preparation. When his hour was come, lifting his eyes to heaven, he prays, "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us." God in Christ, and Christ in Christians—this is the one triple alliance which neither the forces of earth nor the fury of hell can withstand. Outside of this the strongest is weak and worthless. In this alliance the disciple may reap the glorious fulfillment of that transcendent promise, "The works that I do shall he do also." In this sympathetic and vital union, feeling the breath of God on our upturned faces and the pulsations of the divine life in our regenerated hearts, we can do all things. We work in

the strength of omnipotence, and our labors cog into the wheel-work of purposes that are steadily advancing to ultimate and universal success.

(2) *Another condition of being his fellow worker is that we acknowledge and accept, as supreme and final, God's Word of law and grace.* Our own views, blurred by ignorance, dwarfed by limitations, changed with the changing fashion of the times, are often very dear to us. We are ready to do battle for them. But of what use? Printed on the sand, they are washed away by the next tide. Printed in the rock, they perpetuate our shame. Many a man will be sorry by and by for the articles that he has written.

It is the man who thinks God's thoughts after him who achieves what the world will not willingly let die. To be an astronomer, one does not thrust his theories into the heavens, but seeks to know the suns and stars which God has placed there, their orbits, revolutions, and relations. And so to be a worker with God we must not thrust our guesses into his revelations, but acknowledge and accept them as supreme and final. It is not ours to modify a law, or minimize a penalty; not ours to alter a condition or extend a hope; not ours to adopt a conjecture or strain an interpretation. It is only as we know and accept God's purpose and coöperate in his plan, that our efforts further his gracious ends. If, in God's view, man is destined to an unending conscious existence, and we believe with the French Revolutionists, and write over the gateway of our cemeteries, "Death an eternal sleep," we are working neither with God nor with the interests of society. If God regards man as fallen, not mythically, but morally and spiritually fallen, and we regard him as erect and sound, we set ourselves against the methods of divine mercy. If God regards man as depraved, and therefore needing regeneration, and we regard him as erring only through his freedom in seeking light, and needing only culture and congenial environment, God's means of restoration will be distasteful to us, and our devices of no use to him. If God regards man as guilty of sin, the servant and slave of Satan, and loving the bondage, and, therefore, to be pardoned only on account of the atoning blood of Christ, shed on Calvary, and we regard him as needing only to correct his habits and reform his life, we are at odds with infinite wisdom and mercy, and, in our conceit, discredit and trample under foot the one vicarious sacrifice which God employs for human redemption—

a sacrifice which reddens our Bibles with blood, and fills the mansions of glory with song. If God relies upon us to go into all the world and preach *his* gospel to every creature, and we go preaching our gospel, our ethics, our philosophy, our speculations, we show ourselves fools, and not fellow workers.

Some are turning aside to study the ethnic religions and find their relation to Christianity. And such study, no doubt, is wise and helpful, if the contrast as well as the comparison is well considered. Pagan religions, as well as our rationalism, have something in common with Christianity. But what has struck me is that too often the vital difference, the inner, essential unlikeness, seems overlooked. And the distinguishing, saving elements of Christianity are not held up, are not magnified as they ought to be. God has never indorsed any one of the ten great religions. They are dead, practically; all dead but two, and they must go down before the cross of the Nazarene. The gospel is Heaven's cure for man's sin. Its touch alone rekindles the divine life in the soul. Simple for the believing heart as a nursery rhyme, and yet more subtle than the metaphysics of all the schools; embraced by the little child, and yet embracing problems that all our wit and wisdom can never solve, this gospel is the power of God to destroy the wisdom of the wise, and to save them that believe.

Alexander Mackay, the St. Paul of Uganda, says: "Am I not here the link between dying men and the dying Christ? Give me a burning zeal, O God, for winning souls!" And in the great battle for the truth he says, "I took the one ground . . . Christ the sole head, and *his* Word the only guide."

And what did John G. Paton carry to the New Hebrides but God's word of law and grace! He might have gone with his trunk full of masterful speculations, crisp essays looking to a new philosophy of religion, proofs of the impossibility of a final system of theological thought, brilliant theories of heathen reform, and his manuscripts would have served to kindle a fire for the choicest roast ever known in all those islands. But he went teaching them the truth, "as the truth is in Jesus," and the cannibals are transformed into Christians.

Suppose Fidelia Fisk, in Persia, had attempted to entertain that terrible Koord, Guergis, with the gnosticism or agnosticism of our times, who dreams that the evil spirit in him would have been subdued, and the dark scenes of his former cruelty have echoed to the gospel from his lips?

Suppose Robert Moffat had gone to Africaner, that monster of cruelty and blood, with the orations of Cicero, or with one of our brilliant magazine theodicies, would the missionary have ever seen the miracle which followed his visit? No, no! God's Word of law and grace, believed and proclaimed as supreme and final, is our guide and strength and life in this partnership.

(3) *Another condition of this partnership is that we enter with unfaltering will and holy affection, practically and personally, into this work with God.* The beginning of all this gracious movement is with Him who gave his Son to be our Saviour. And the Saviour's word, answering to our experience, is, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." This is the key-note of heaven's triumphant song: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

If we look back we can see that from the gates of Eden, barred by the flaming sword, to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathæa, opened by the resurgent Christ, God has been at work, guiding pioneers, removing obstacles, balancing the nations, instructing his people with prescribed sacrifice and daily service, leading them sometimes without observation, and sometimes with an outstretched arm and a mighty hand. And in all those early movements towards the establishing of his kingdom in the earth, man was a helper. In these nineteen hundred years, now almost passed, obeying the impulse divine, man has helped to sanctify the family, to purify the school, to reform society, to humanize governments, to multiply beneficent charities, to establish the churches, and to extend missions. We do not forget that many and gifted souls, in fellowship with God, have towered gracefully up towards the perfect standard, and wrought glorious deeds. History has been made luminous by their lives. Language has been enriched by their experiences. Reformers, heroes, ministers, and martyrs — their example has been an inspiration in every succeeding age.

But it cannot be maintained that the Church, with the full measure of her strength and of her resources, has ever given herself up to this work. From the first there has been a want of vision. The Pharisees, who saw his wonderful works daily, knew not the Lord. That was not surprising. But even the disciples failed to know him. Listening to his inspiring exposition of patriarch, prophet, and Psalmist, till their hearts burned within

them, they wist not who it was. And until now, often, it is only as the day declines, and the shadows darken the landscape, that even good men get their eyes open so as to recognize the risen Christ. Dim, distant, unreal is his person. Hard, exacting, are his claims. Too many feel no interest in his teaching, and contribute no aid to the establishment of his kingdom. We are not given up, exhaustively, to be fellow workers with God. The evidence against us is direct and dark. Where is our appreciation of eternal life, and our devotion to Christian service, when on Sabbath evening, all the theaters and concerts running full, the officers of the church are ashamed to count the worshipers? One thousandth part of the money spent continuously in acknowledged superfluities, extravagances, and luxuries, would support continuously all the missions of the world today. Like the servant's talent hid in a napkin, jewelry enough lies buried in our safety vaults to fill all the chests of the Lord's treasury. A traveling circus, designedly and defiantly desecrating every Lord's day from the time it leaves winter quarters till it returns, takes more money out of a community than all the church members and citizens together contribute for the salvation of a lost world. One opera singer, for one night's exhibition, receives enough to support a score of missionaries in darkest Africa for a whole year.

All the money annually contributed for foreign missions by all the churches in Christendom would hardly pay the drink bill of the United States for three days. I do not mean that Christians spend their money in drink. The testimony is against us, though we taste not one drop. The liquor is consumed and paid for, and if the pauper classes can pay such an enormous tax for their own degradation, then surely the praying classes can give as much for the world's redemption. To slide into habits of sensuous gratification and luxury, and enjoy the good-fellowship of the world, is easy enough. To fall down before fashion, that Juggernaut of Christian lands, beneath whose flower-scented wheels all spiritual taste and life are ground out of us, is common. But we forget the incisive call of the Master: "If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut it off; if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out. Better enter life maimed and halt, than, having two hands or two feet, be cast into eternal fire." The first law of our coöperative service with God is self-denial. There is no true partnership until all is deposited in his hand, to be used at his pleasure.

Brought to this standard, and tried by the Scriptural tests, the best life has not been lived yet; the best church has not been organized yet; the best missionary has not been sent forth yet. And most of us, self-indulgent, guilty and ashamed, confronted by the measure of the stature of Christ, the perfect example, can only exclaim, What dwarfs we are! The world waits to see the true Church. Most of us are too far from the heart of Jesus, where the beloved John pillowed his head; too far from Paul, who counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord. We are too far from the Senior Partner, who so yearned for the salvation of aliens and enemies that he gave his Son, his only Son, to the agonies of the cross for our redemption. Oh for a deeper experience of joyous submission to the present, active agency of the Holy Spirit! Oh for a sympathetic, supreme devotion to the work in which we are fellow workers with God! Thus united with the Head, and with one another, our affections all alive, our energies enlisted, revival would develop out of revival, as the full corn out of the blade and the ear, and Pentecost would be a daily experience in every city and country round the world.

(4) *And, further, to be a fellow worker with God, we must take up from time to time the particular work to which he invites.* In the development of his designs the great primal worker is not always doing the same thing. He never abandons his aim, but in the attainment of it, as in the round of the year, there is a winter season, when the dependent forces are quietly nourished and matured for the beneficent and beautiful work of the spring; and there is an autumn season, when the reapers must gird themselves and go forth to gather the harvest.

Today we stand unquestionably at the opening of a grand missionary era. All signs indicate it. All voices affirm it.

There are certain conditions of society existing today, certain restless turnings, certain extraordinary activities and expectations, which, in other days, have preceded and accompanied great religious quickenings and missionary undertakings. In the sixteenth century, for example, a ferment of undefined wants, a sense of burdens and wrongs, and a bold intellectual activity ushered in the great Reformation.

At the beginning of this century there was agitation, movement, and expectancy — a presentiment of some undefined ap-

proach. There was a conscious throbbing in the fingers' ends of an undeveloped power of skill and invention. The spinning-mule was introduced into the factories, and the power-loom followed. The opening of this century was a wonderful mechanical era. But there were ideas and anticipations which refused to move in the orbit of mechanics. Society as well as the individual was moved. The churches and governments felt a strange widening of thought, and something like the returning pulse of robust health. At the same time, slightingly recognized, half comprehended, the missionary spirit appeared,— appeared at various points, in spiritual power, amid the material and intellectual workmen that were just opening the new era.

And now at the close of the century, as at the opening, we have unrest, agitation, and an undefined but powerful expectancy pervading all classes, involving farms and factories, public assemblies and private dwellings, established governments and constitutional iconoclasts. Disappointment, discontent, are everywhere. Axioms are questioned. Old landmarks are denied. Family life is merging its individuality in tenement houses and clubs. Business is changing its methods. Education stands on tiptoe, looking to the horizon all round for something new. Multitudes are watching to catch the signal of some movement beyond the hills.

But in all this there is neither cure nor end. The cause of all this commotion is yet to be apprehended and appreciated. The cure, radical and complete, is yet to be acknowledged and applied. And I must think that further and greater disappointment is in store for those who seek a satisfying good in economic readjustments, or in social reorganization, or in the nationalizing of the land. The cry, Lo here! lo there! is the cry of the color-blind, the inexperienced, the adventurer.

But disappointments, now in this hope and now in that, may narrow the field and enrich the mind, and turn the eyes to look elsewhere for rest and satisfaction. Disappointment on the material field may turn men, troubled and struggling for something better, from the material to the spiritual; from the human to the divine; from all economic and social conditions, which are, at best, only incidents in the coming of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life. As the perturbations of the planets suggested and led to the discovery of an unknown member of our solar system, so these commotions of our day may lead to the discovery of

Him of whom, now as in early times, some spiritually sighted John may say, "Behold there standeth one among you whom ye know not." Such discovery is at least a legitimate hope.

But be this as it may, we have indications of a grand missionary era and advance far more reliable than any hints furnished by a study of the past. The world has become the home of one family. Steam and electricity have made the great continents neighbors, and the little islands their children. And when one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Commerce insists upon reciprocity round the world. Christianity insists upon the universal brotherhood of mankind. And the success of missionary work amid the luxuriant growths of the equator and amid the barren ice fields of the poles, demonstrating the adaptation of the one Christian religion to all peoples and tribes and nations, and producing everywhere the same beautiful and blessed results, — the success of missionary work is a response to the claim of brotherhood at once relevant and remarkable. It is no longer doubted that those who can see should help the blind; that the strong should help the weak; that the learned should help the ignorant; that the full should feed the hungry. And so our white-winged ships, filled with bread by the fidelity of the brotherly instinct, go from the shores of plenty to the land of famine; and the swift-footed steamer, plying back and forth, becomes a shuttle in the world's great loom, weaving the interests of the different nations, like threads from different spools, into one common and costly product. A great change has come in the attitude of mankind towards the Christian religion. The highways of all the powerful nations are level to the missionary's feet. Great iron gates, long barred and bolted, like that through which Peter passed under the guidance of the angel, open of themselves to the disciples of Jesus, and the kings of the earth are compelled to recognize the unseen, resistless hand.

And corresponding with all this, and more marked if possible, is the change which has come in the mind of the churches. One hundred years ago the missionary cause had no hold upon the heart of the churches. Here and there a young man pleaded with a faltering tongue the claims of the heathen; but the masters of assemblies in Church and State silenced, with a great authority, the childlike utterances of the missionary spirit.

Today populous cities are ready to contend for the honor of erecting monuments to commemorate the fame of the missionary. Today the secular press records the steps and praises the enterprize of the devoutest disciples. Today hundreds of young men, in process of education, called by the Spirit of God, welcomed and aided by the churches, are pushed on and up by thousands who are behind them, even as the early shafts of the morning, which scatter the darkness and change the eastern gray to gold, are pushed on and up by the still hidden advances of the rising sun. It is a new dawn upon which our grateful, tearful eyes do rest; it is a new attitude in which the young appear. The years persuade me that my heart must be growing old; but I have intense satisfaction in the spirit of these various movements and organizations of our young people. The Pilgrim fathers embarked for our shores having "a great hope and inward zeal of laying some good foundations, or at least to make some way thereunto for the propagating and advancing of the gospel in these remote parts of the world." As by a law of hereditary grace, we see the same spirit breaking forth again in the children; the same beautiful, benevolent spirit. And our hearts swell with gratitude and hope as we forecast the future. We look upon these young disciples, equipped with the learning of the schools, and, what is vastly better, instructed in the inspired Word and led by the Holy Ghost, as proof of the change that has come, and prophecy of what is coming. Ready to go wherever God will, the radiance of their countenances is not the reflection of the gates of pearl which we sometimes see on the face of the dying believer, but the glow of the morning. The song swelling up from such a multitude of hearts —

"Christ for the world we sing,
The world to Christ we bring" —

I hear it, I believe it. Six thousand young missionaries mustering into the service, and more to follow. When many of our flags were in the hands of the enemy, and our sons and brothers lay stark and cold on the battlefield, or wasting away with wounds and fever in the hospitals, that far-sighted, tender-hearted President issued a patriotic call for volunteers to prosecute the war and save the Union. And from all our homes, and hills, and valleys, away across the country from Massachusetts Bay to the Golden Gate, there went back to his ear the thrilling response, "We're

coming, father Abraham, three hundred thousand more." And today, looking just over the ridge of the present to the tablelands of the future, and listening with the young to the call of God for volunteers to rescue the perishing and redeem the nations, I hear the mighty response from Christian families, and schools, and seminaries all over this Christian land, "We are coming, God of our father Abraham, God of missions — we're coming, three hundred thousand more." And this would be something like an adequate force for the work which Christendom has in hand — the conversion of the world.

Hitherto we have been slow and timid; indifferent, if not blind, to the providences of God. The positions we hold today are only half manned. And thus to hesitate, and falter, and delay, is, in many lands, to lose the golden opportunity. Fields are ready for the sickle; but where are the reapers? Other fields are ready for the seed; but where are the sowers? Idolatry in many lands is losing its power. The temple is left empty, swept and garnished; but while we delay, the exiled, with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, returns, and they enter in and dwell there. Gnostics and agnostics; theosophists and mystics; polished skepticism and vulgar infidelity; Hegel, Strauss, Spencer and Renan — quick to see an advantage, and always ready, they anticipate us, and fortify the country against our tardy approach. Early advance is easy entrance. Why, then, shall we hesitate and delay? When God is calling to his Church as with the voice of seven thunders, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings," why not obey the heavenly vision?

A missionary era this, and our obligation to meet the providence of God; this is the point we urge. Now that the great highways of the world are all open; now that the ends of the earth are brought together; now that the divine finger is pointing to this particular work; now that the white signals are set along every shore; now that the spirit of self-denial is breathed into many hearts; now that the weird, plaintive cry of paganism, waxing louder and louder, like the storm-borne swell of the troubled sea, pierces our ears, "Come over and help us;" now that the hearts of the young, under a divine impulse, sparkle with enthusiasm; now that golden opportunities invite — now is our time for quick, strong, decisive work. Now!

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide
In the strife of truth with falsehood for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light."

(5) And now, fifthly, let it be said, directly and emphatically, we have the means; we have the means to execute the boldest choice. God, who gives us power to get gain, God has put the means into our hands. *And the right use of what he has intrusted to us is the further condition of being a co-worker with him.* His agents, his stewards we are.

It is conceded, on all sides, that our position on this round earth — God hath appointed to the nations the times and the bounds of their habitation — it is conceded that our geographical position gives us, as a people, immense superiority. Our position protects us against the perils to which the nations of the Old World are constantly exposed. Our friendly relations with all the nations of this new world, recently developed and established, augment our superiority; while our resources, as yet but partially in hand, furnish to industrious citizens an enormous wealth. Our first business is, of course, to consecrate ourselves to God in this partnership. And here is great danger of self-deception. This sweet and blessed work done — supremely, exhaustively done first — our own selves given to the Lord, after the pattern commended in apostolic times, then our wealth must be consecrated and used in this partnership.

And just here, as it seems to me, a work of instruction needs to be done; needs to be done in all our schools and churches. Judging from the reports of sermons and addresses made in behalf of our various religious undertakings, the true principle is not recognized. One argues, "We ought to give a tenth." Another argues, "We ought to give in charity at least as much as we spend in luxury," and so on. Now by some means, under some constraint, the pulpit, the platform, and the religious press ought to get down to bottom rock in this matter.

A parishioner says to his pastor: "Did I understand you to say, Sunday morning, in your pulpit, that no man owns any property in this world — no stocks, no bonds, no houses, no land? Such teaching strikes me as not only radical, but revolutionary in the last degree. And if this is to be the doctrine of the pulpit,

then all I have to say is that my pew is no place for a level-headed business man."

"My dear sir," replies the pastor, "that you are a first-class business man, one of the most prudent, persevering, and successful in all our community, nobody doubts. And we are all glad of your success. By the way, I see that you have elected a new president for your bank."

"Yes; the old president seemed to think that he owned the bank, and if he wanted an extra fast horse, or a box at the new theater, he had only to raise his salary and take the money; or take the money and expect us to raise his salary to cover the cost."

"And I see that you chose a new superintendent for your railroad the other day."

"Yes; we were obliged to. We must have a man to run the road on business principles, and for the benefit of the stockholders, and not for the pleasure of the superintendent or his family. Properly managed, that road can pay the owners a good eight per cent, and lay by a handsome surplus."

"Yes," replies the pastor, "I understand that is one of the best roads in the country, and since you took hold of it, it has improved wonderfully. And calling at your farmhouse this week, I find that you have installed a new farmer; a good many changes you are making this spring."

"Yes; the former incumbent got to be altogether too easy, not to say presuming. The milk-pails must go first to his house, and the best of the chickens and the lambs to his table. I took him on the idea that he was to be my agent, and to develop the farm for me, using for himself only what would give him most efficiency in my service. But he seemed to think that the farm was his, or at any rate the products of it."

"Now, my dear sir," says the pastor, "just this is what I meant when I said that no man really owns anything in this world. I am not a socialist, nor a nationalist. Your president does not own the bank; your superintendent does not own the railroad; your farmer does not own the farm. Each is your agent, and responsible to you for all that is intrusted to his hands. And in the same sense, on the same principle, carried to its source, you do not own the houses and stocks and lands which you hold. Your title before God is no better than the title of these men before you. They are stewards, and so are you.

"The Creator's original grant to man was not a deed, but a commission — Tend and dress, keep and till the ground. So the earth was committed to the race. You have no other title. You have added nothing to what already existed. You have simply changed the place and relation of a little lumber, a few cattle, and a small amount of silver and gold. All this was God's before, and it is his now. And in all this you are to him just what your farmer is to you — an agent, a steward, responsible to God for what he has intrusted to you, as they are responsible to you for what you have intrusted to them. 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof,' and is to be watched and worked, sowed and reaped for him."

Now, brethren, the work of the Lord will not be done until the principle here recognized becomes a settled conviction in all hearts, and a practice in all our lives. And this principle of stewardship thus acknowledged and practiced, what a change comes in the resources of the churches! Every one who has received anything from the Lord, holding it, not a tenth of it, not any fraction of it, larger or smaller, but the whole of it — every one holding himself and all his possessions as a trust, to be used in this divine co-partnership, practically, faithfully, as a trust — why, the treasury of our missionary societies would be filled and flooded as by a spring torrent!

The wealth of this country is something almost fabulous. Mr. Edward Atkinson reckons the steady increase of the nation's wealth at three millions a day. Dr. Josiah Strong in the last edition of *Our Country* puts it at five millions a day, omitting Sundays. Others place it at six millions a day.

Christians constitute one fifth of our population. Taking now less than the medium estimate, suppose the increase of our wealth to be twenty-five millions a week; and suppose, further, the Christian to be as clever as the average man — then every Sabbath morning the churches have five millions as the gain of the week, to be divided and disbursed in the service of the Lord. At the end of the year the churches have two hundred and sixty millions to account to God for, and to use, according to their best discretion, in partnership with him. Looking over the world and listening to the cry of the perishing, has our God reason to be satisfied with our use of his money?

But leave these heavier sums and take a lighter count. Suppose the million of young people connected with the Christian Endeavor Societies succeed in giving each two cents a week, that is more than a million dollars a year for benevolence. Suppose every church member in our denomination gives one cent a day to foreign missions — that amounts to one million eight hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars a year; that is more than three and one half times as much as we now give. But, stepping over denominational lines, suppose every Protestant church member in the United States gives one cent a day extra, that would add to our missionary treasuries more than fifty millions a year. Do not such figures suggest some radical revision of our methods of doing business in partnership with the Lord? Wealth, money enough we have to give the gospel to every human being while yet many of the white heads of this receding generation linger in the setting sun of the nineteenth century.

Would an appeal in our pulpits, from every minister in the land, for an extra cent a day seem insignificant? Look at the result — fifty millions and more for missions!

But change the view again. See what we have done as a nation. Look back to 1860 and the four years that followed. We expended in a civil war of unequaled magnitude eight thousand millions of dollars; buried six hundred thousand men in military graves; maimed and disabled for life more than one million of the young men of the land. And the result,— a greater, stronger, freer, richer nation. The war, with all its enormous expenditure and sacrifice, is an incident in past history, an event passing out of mind.

Now let a consuming piety take the place of a common patriotism; let a zeal like that which impelled to such expenditure of property and life engage all Christian hearts in the work for which God gave his Son to the death of the cross, and every land beneath the broad canopy of heaven will resound with the messages of mercy, and the fulfillment of those promises and prophecies which stagger our belief will become events of common occurrence. "The heathen will become his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession."

Brethren, a stupendous work is this; a stupendous work indeed, but one inspired and sustained by supreme motive and

assurance. Were it a human undertaking, a struggle in the flesh, supported by mere natural forces, for one I would give it up. But since it is a divine undertaking, and I know that the Hand that wheels the stars in their courses is in it, I go forward. That unseen Hand I see in the removal of obstacles, in the breaking down of caste, in the overthrow of altars and idols, in the opening of pagan temples to the preaching of the cross.

The voice of God I hear in the repeated call of the missionaries: "Send us reënforcements at once. Fifty souls slipped through my fingers last year for the want of one more teacher; one hundred and seventy-five villages are calling to us for missionary teachers." "Four hundred of your best men for India." "One thousand of your best men for China." "Eleven new stations for Japan." Fifteen hundred men, a Baptist secretary calls for as their quota today.

The voice of God I hear also in the long, loud cry that comes to us from pagan lips. From over the mountains, whose tops are just beginning to glow in the light of the Sun of Righteousness, they are crying to us; out of the deep, dark valleys, and out of the deeper and darker recesses of heathen shrines, they are crying, "Come over and help us."

Africa, too, last of the continents, mother of untold miseries, from her broad, arable plains, from the shores of her beautiful lakes, from the midst of her vast, thick forests, and from the desolations of her wasted and smoking villages — Africa is crying to us, "Come over and help us." It is the voice of God, brethren, the voice of God going on before.

The *approbation* of God we have in the success which attends our labors. Robert Mackenzie opens one of his chapters in his history of the nineteenth century with these words: "In the foremost rank of powers destined to change the face of the world, stand Christian missions. . . . The success already attained gives sure promise of results, the greatness of which we, as yet, but dimly perceive." The growth of these United States is a marvel in the history of the world. But we have been two hundred and seventy years growing to sixty two or three millions. Plymouth Colony grew to be only three hundred persons in ten years; grew to be only five hundred persons in fifteen years; grew to be only about eight thousand persons in seventy years. Christian missions have grown with far greater rapidity. It is little more than

seventy years since the Republic of God was planted on pagan shores, and today we have about one million of converts and three millions of adherents to this kingdom. Two hundred and seventy years of missionary growth, and who shall count the subjects of the kingdom of heaven in pagan lands? The same strong, steady momentum of increase continued in the future, and who shall predict the number of converts, churches, schools, colleges, and native preachers? The success already attained so emboldens our hearts and quickens our vision that we begin to see the fulfillment of our great Senior Partner's promise, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

And this recognition of the divine presence and of the divine favor encourages us greatly to press on. In the mountains that give strength to our continent and hide the mines of precious ore, a mighty cross appears to our confiding eyes. In the Southern horizon, framed of stars, is a cross to which we may not climb. But all rhetoric and imagination aside, in sober truth it may be said, a few brave disciples, in fellowship with God, have carried the cross of Christ far in advance of our present lines and planted it as a banner close up under the strong forts and hoary fastnesses of heathenism. And now one of two things must be done, either the hosts of God's elect must move up and sustain that banner and carry it to victory, or leave it to suffer defeat, defeat!

God's hand waving it there, our heroic, self-sacrificing comrades upholding it there, who is to turn his face backward? *Withdraw! retrench! retreat!* and God leading on? *No;* such is the cry of cowards and traitors! Six hundred missionaries buried in the soil of India; was it for this that they died? Harriet Newell, Pliny Fisk, David Stoddard, Eli Smith, and all the others whose dust enriches heathen soil, was it for this that they gave their brave and beautiful lives? Withdraw from such consecrated hights, retreat over such graves? God forbid!

No; we have had enough of this querulous, timid, tentative, faithless policy. We must go forward, forward, or all the Christly manhood of our souls will die out. We must go forward, or those for whom Christ died must perish. We must go forward, or many a costly gain will be lost. It is too late to give grudgingly; too late to question the Divine Will; too late to doubt

the success of this work; too late to idle on with folded hands. Avarice, appetite, ambition, worldliness, must give place to the supremacy of this divine co-partnership.

We are fellow workers with God. Let us, pastors and parishioners, every one, all, go away to our homes, inspired and impelled by this sublime truth. Let every one give from week to week as God shall prosper him. Let the young men and maidens multiply the *extra-cent-a-day* societies, and so add millions to millions, and so advance the work of missions. "The Lord said, Speak unto my people that they go forward." Amen.

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THE COMING OF THE KING.

"TELL YE THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, BEHOLD, THY KING COMETH UNTO THEE." — *Matt. xxi: 5.*

THE coming of Christ to Jerusalem on the Hosanna day may be taken in some sense as a sign or symbol of his spiritual coming in the fullness of time to establish his kingdom among all nations. He came to Jerusalem in outward aspect meek and lowly, yet with more than the majesty of a king and the might of a conqueror. He was welcomed by the shoutings of the people and the songs of the children. But some stood aside and complained of the enthusiasm of the reception, and wondered why the world had gone after him. The best robes the poor could buy were strewn in his path, and palms of victory were broken down from the trees by the roadside for the beast that he rode to tread upon. But even then some were conspiring to subject him to the shame of defeat and the death of the Cross. He did not come as conquerors came in the olden time with the blast of trumpets and the blazonry of golden eagles and the measured tramp of marching men. But no dictator or consul or Cæsar ever climbed the hill of the Capitol with the spoils of nations in his train to celebrate a triumph which should live with the simple story of that meek and lowly King who wept over Jerusalem and looked through tears of sorrow to the far-off day when he should rejoice over a ransomed world.

Some read the story with sacred enthusiasm, and wish they had been there to witness a triumph which could never again be repeated in all time. But we need not go back to Jerusalem and Olivet to join the train of the rejoicing disciples or to mingle our voices with those of the children of Zion who sang Hosannas. Ours is the day of the coming of the King. Voices of welcome are lifted up in twenty times as many languages as were heard in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, every one speaking in the tongue wherein he was born, and all saying from the ends of the earth, "Behold, your King cometh; go ye out to meet him." Let the gates of all cities be thrown wide to receive their King. Let all the continents of the earth prepare highways for his coming. Let the waste places of the wilderness blossom as the rose. Let the desolations of many generations be built into beautiful homes, and barren fields be enriched with golden harvests, and millions of emancipated people rejoice in the coming reign of righteousness and peace. Ours is the day of the coming of the King, not to one select and favored people only, but to all nations; not to one ancient and sacred city, but to every hamlet and home where human beings dwell; not on one great festive day only, but with the constancy of the journeys of the sun, and with a gladness which shall fill the whole Christian year with song.

So the first glance at the condition of the world as it is in our day suggests the subject which may most fittingly engage our thoughts at the opening of our missionary meeting. The coming of Christ may be seen everywhere in the rapid progress of his kingdom among all nations. In so saying we do not forget that the battle against the powers of evil is still raging, and that the forces enlisted against them in the field are few in comparison with the foe. After having traveled twenty thousand miles in heathen lands with eye and ear open, and intent all the way to see and hear what can be known of their condition, one does not need to come back to America to learn that

the dark places of the earth are still full of the habitations of cruelty. But we may well begin our deliberations with a rapid glance at the ground already gained that we may be animated to press on and win the vast territory of the promised land which remains to be possessed.

Every people on the face of the whole earth has already felt the quickening power of the new life which Christ brings into the world. They do not always know whence it comes or what it means, but they are awakened as never before to the question whether they have yet found out the true life for man to lead, and whether a new teacher may come to make known a better way. Rays from the Sun of Righteousness have penetrated millions of homes where the missionary has never been. The people roused from the sleep of ages are looking for the source of the light which has broken their slumbers. Millions in the populous East are in the condition of the Chinaman who cried aloud from the crowd of listeners in response to the first address he ever heard from a missionary: "That is the word which I have been waiting twenty years to hear. That is the first ray of light piercing the dark cloud with which we are all covered in this land." Many who have received only a brief and occasional visit from the messenger of salvation are ready to say, as one said in India: "Come oftener and stay longer. You only tell us enough to make us want to hear more. You take away the old blind faith which we received from our fathers, and then leave us when we are just beginning to see the coming of a better light. Come oftener and stay longer, and then we will show you how glad we are to hear your words and obey them." Sometimes the touring missionary, moving from place to place and preaching the gospel as he goes, is saluted as one was in Southern India: "Yesterday I heard you in such a town ten miles away, the day before in another town as far off beyond, today you are here telling the same story. It seems as if you were everywhere." That is just what the missionary would like to

have the native think. He only regrets that his helpers are so few that he cannot fulfill the expectation. Five years ago the Brahmins of Madras were saying that the Christians had flung their net over all India from the Himalayas on the north to Cape Comorin on the south, and were gathering all tribes and tongues into their fold. And then they turned on themselves and their people with the bitter confession that their ancient faith was like a tank from which water is always running out and none is ever running in. It is only a question of time, they said, how soon it will be empty. At the same season the Brahmins of Benares were saying that in a few years the holy Ganges will lose its cleansing power, and then where shall they go to find a fountain to wash away the defilement of sin? It is much for them to lose faith in the traditions of their fathers. It is more for them to be asking where they shall find a firmer foundation on which to rest their hope.

All over the great Eastern World there is a growing expectation of change, a feeling that the old order has run its course and must soon give way to something better fitted to answer human wants and lift the people up to a higher and a better life. The old order has been glorified in solemn prose and sounding rhyme. But it was attended from age to age by the desolations of war, the degradations of ignorance and superstition, the miseries of poverty and plague and famine. To decorate one throne of royal state like that of Delhi, to build one tomb like the Taj of Agra, to support one harem of sensuality like that of Jehan or Aurungzebe, millions were robbed and thousands were slain.

Then religion came, with no light for the ignorant, no liberty for the enslaved; it only increased the exactions of the taxgatherer and deified the brutality of the prince. The land was made desolate, and the people walked in darkness and in the shadow of death. But now they are lifting up their eyes to the hills from whence help cometh. Now they are searching round the whole horizon for signs of the coming day. Every strange voice is listened to with

hope of hearing some better word than the past has spoken. Every new leader is pressed with the question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" The spirit of inquiry has been awakened in the most ancient nations where the law of caste and custom had forbidden all change for centuries. Many thousands have already surrendered the traditions and superstitions which have come down to them from a hundred generations. Millions more are ready to follow their example just as fast as teachers come to tell them a better way of life.

Native princes of India of the highest rank, rajahs who pride themselves on their descent from names renowned in Eastern story, openly confess that the Hindu pundits cannot stand in argument with the Christian pundits from the West. The dying Brahmin, rich and learned in Western lore, solemnly charges his children with his last breath, "if they ever change their religion to become Christians." High officials in principalities which still maintain the show of royal state say in confidence to Christian travelers from the West that the religion of the Bible is good and true, and equally adapted to all peoples and times and lands, and that their grandchildren will make public profession of the faith from which men are now withheld by the consequences of breaking caste. I have been told by Buddhist priests in their own temple, and by worshipers of Siva in the presence of their own idols, that they could not recommend their religion to me, and that it would be contrary to the best interests of mankind if I should attempt to teach it in America. In the city where the disciples were first called Christians the Mohammedan governor confessed to me that the power and the peculiarity of Islam are to pull down and make waste what others have built, never to build up or to beautify. I found on the Western Hills, a little way from Peking, Buddhist temples rented to foreign families for a summer resort. Servants were doing the most common work in the most holy place, in the presence of the idol gods. They made a clotheshorse of

Confucius, and little children played bo-peep with Buddha, and the priest, who came occasionally to light joss sticks before the idols, looked on with smiling approbation. The old reverence for the worshiped images was losing its power over the stolid Chinese heart, and the search for something better was started in the slowly moving Chinese mind. The most utterly conservative and immovable people on the face of the earth are waking up from the sleep of ages to find their ship of state fallen into a place where two seas meet, and rocking with the mighty movement which rolls in upon them from the East and the West. The great mass of humanity making up the Chinese Empire of three hundred millions of people is like the ocean when stirred to its utmost depths by viewless winds and unable to rest. All eyes are looking out anxiously to the future, dreading change, and yet expecting that it will come. All cling to the old order, and yet with the feeling that it has lasted too long already. All over that mysterious and mythical land from which endless contradictions and exaggerations come, there is a feeling growing stronger every year that the old faith of the fathers had no foundation in fact, and the old philosophy of the sages was false to the firmest convictions and the clearest observations of the human mind. The mass of the people are an easy prey to the evil designs of selfish and cunning agitators, just because they are looking and longing for something better than Confucius or Buddha or Lao-tsze ever taught them. They are waiting for some great and divine Champion to appear with such mighty personal attractions as to draw all men unto himself.

We have been told by some of the most enlightened and progressive philosophers of our day that multitudes of the human family are so low down in ignorance and savagery and brutality that spiritual truth can never enter their darkened minds. Ages of development towards reasoning manhood will be needed before they can be lifted out of the horrible pit of filth and misery in which they are found by

the intelligent traveler today. But that has been done many times already within the memory of many who now live. Cannibals and child murderers and fetich worshipers have so utterly renounced their horrible superstitions that young men, the children of such fathers, have grown up to manhood in the land of their birth without ever having seen an idol, without ever having met a heathen.

As thinking and reasonable men we are called upon to put faith in the power which has wrought such mighty changes of character and destiny in many lands in our day. We are not ashamed to say that we believe in the fitness and sufficiency of that power to do other and greater works for the uplifting of the most depressed and the enlightenment of the most darkened nations in days to come, and already near at hand. Such faith is forced upon us by a clear, calm consideration of the facts which the history of missions sets before us for our study every year. We believe that human thought can be sent under the sea and over the mountains and all round the world faster than the wing of eagles ever flew, not because we understand the force which sends the word, but because the thing is done before our eyes every day. We believe that the blind, wire-bound wheels that revolve all night in the prison of the engine room can light our streets with the blaze of noonday, not because we understand the mysterious energy which does the work, but because it is done, and none can dispute the fact. We believe that our earth is held to God's covenant of day and night, and is hurled onward in its orbit a thousand times faster than the swift train flies on the track, and all in everlasting harmony with the movements of millions of worlds that traverse the high fields of immensity, and not because we understand the force, but because our best science says it is done. Just as reasonably we believe in the reality and the greatness of the power which is moving among the old Eastern nations, breaking the slumber of ages, stirring them to inquiry, lifting them up to a truer and better life. We gladly accept the fact, and we

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contact with all grades of human society, it has been exposed to all changes of human opinion and practice; but it never appeared so real, so great, so commanding as it does now in the full light of this last and best of all the Christian centuries. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the ends which it seeks, the authority by which it is confirmed, the good which will spring from its accomplishment or the force of the claim for service and sacrifice which it brings home to every Christian heart. To give no heed to that claim, to stand aside and take no part in that greatest enterprise of all the ages, is to miss the main purpose of life and renounce the best hope of the world. Whoever withholds his hand from work or gift for this great cause contributes the full force of his own example to quench the best light in our own land and to disappoint the expectation of heathen in the dark places of the earth. The fire upon our own altars will go out just as fast as we cease to supply it with fuel and raise the flame high enough to be seen as a beacon by the most distant nations. Millions of eyes are turned with longing expectation to this land. The heathen have learned enough of our religion to know that we are unfaithful to its teaching if we do not send it to them. All over the populous East there is a growing expectation of better news from the West to dispel their despondency and kindle a brighter hope in their hearts. Among all the people, highest and lowest, there is a strong feeling that the old order has had its day, and must give place to something better fitted to answer human wants and lift them up to a higher and better life. Even while yet they have no desire or intention of renouncing the traditions of their fathers, they are satisfied that they must receive new life from some source if they are to have any part in the great advance of the world in riches and power, in knowledge and liberty; and it is to the Christian nations that they look for the bringing in of a better day. They express that expectation in terms suited to their own traditions; but it

is always an outlook for the coming One, a Leader and Commander, a Messiah who shall come bringing salvation.

The wild mountaineers of Lebanon are looking every year with increasing earnestness for the return of their long-expected Hakim who shall lift up the standard of a better faith and lead them to glory and victory. It is the spirit of Christ in the world which has awakened the expectation of Messiahs among the nations in our day far more widely than it was cherished in the East at the time of his coming. All eyes are looking for a new order in society; all hearts are longing for a wider hope; all, in their own crude way, interpret the signs of better days close at hand. The dark millions of the Soudan and the sources of the Nile have only to hear the rumor that the Mahdi has appeared in some new quarter, and they are ready to march through fiery deserts and pestilential jungles to rally at his call and follow where he leads. The scattered tribes of many names and mystic faith that occupy the wild hills and broad plains of the old Persian Empire are looking for coming change, as the Magi of old looked for the Star in the East and followed its lead to the manger of the new-born King. The most fanatical and intractable tribes of the desert begin to long for the quickening of the old, dead faith of fixedness and force, and the incoming of a life large enough to take in the whole brotherhood of man. The invisible wall of caste, which has been built up high as heaven, deep as the grave, separating people of the same race and language from each other for ages, is slowly crumbling down of itself. The light of truth shines upon it and it silently disappears, as the snow of spring sinks into the earth when breathed upon by gentle winds from the south. Now the deified Brahmin and the despised Sudra sit on the same seat in the railway car, and both are asking for a divine Daysman who will join the hands of the two and make them brothers. The idle, impassive Buddhist is waking up from the sleep of ages, looking around all quarters of the sky for signs of the breaking day. He is getting weary of his cold, soulless,

hopeless system of repression, impermanence, self-annihilation, and is now worshiping an impersonation of Mercy as a first step towards faith in Him whose mercy endureth forever. Forty millions of people in the beautiful island Empire of Japan have stepped right out of the fast-bound and conservative heathenism of twenty-five hundred years growth into the glaring light and stirring activities of the nineteenth century. They are so eager for change, so intent upon trying paths which their fathers never trod, that it requires the calmest judgment, the best-balanced minds from the West, to temper their enthusiasm and to direct their efforts. Within the lifetime of men still young they have begun to inquire with irrepressible earnestness for the source of the power and the progress of Christian nations, and how they can make it their own. So are the millions of the Old World roused to inquiry and new endeavor in our time to such a degree as never before in all the past. Faith in their old superstitions is everywhere shaken; the outlook for something better is everywhere growing keener and more constant; the wall of prejudice and hostility separating them from Christian nations is slowly sinking out of sight; the frantic endeavor to revive the old traditions, leaving out their coarseness and absurdity, is only a confession of alarm and a cry to their fellows for help to save the sinking ship. The Moslem reads the gospel, and questions whether it were not a mistake to set up Mohammed above Jesus. The Hindu stopped building temples to his countless gods years ago. The Buddhist wakes from his dream of Nirvana, and questions whether it were not better to let go the dead Buddha and cling to the living Christ. Everywhere comes the call from the mass of the people a million fold louder than that which came to Paul in the night at Troas: "Come over and help us. Have pity on our blindness and send us light. Visit us in our bondage and bring us liberty."

It is our high privilege, our most urgent and sacred duty to hear that call, and send out the light bearers who will show the benighted and the wandering the way of life.

Telegraphs and railways and steamships bring them so near that we can join hands across the seas and bind the whole human family together in bonds of sympathy and brotherhood. The enslaved of the Old World look especially to this land of liberty for deliverance from the bondage of superstition and darkness of despair. The name of America is an inspiration and a hope in all the East. It awakens no suspicion of government interference or territorial acquisition. No missionaries are received with so much confidence as those who come from our own country. Let the American traveler stand up to speak by interpreter in any gathering place of the East and the common people will hear him gladly. They expect from him words of hope and encouragement for themselves. They listen with delight to the story of a people made great by liberty and prosperous by education. When told of the great extent and growing riches and prospective power of this land they long to share in its prosperity and find out the source of its irrepressible life. Just as soon as there is a spirit of inquiry awakened anywhere in the far East there is a longing and expectant look turned toward the West from whence the new light comes. That awakened expectation of the East brings us our great opportunity, and at the same time it lays upon us our great obligation.

If we answer the call by giving our best of money and men we shall get back much more than we give. Generous, intelligent, self-sacrificing devotion to the fulfillment of the divine commission to disciple all nations will do as much to enlarge our own hearts and lift us up to a truer and better life as our gifts will do for the heathen. We shall rise above all our home jealousies, divisions and controversies, and become a strong, united and happy brotherhood in Christ when we open our treasuries and pour out our most precious and sacred gifts to prepare the way for the coming of the King in all the earth. Earnest, intelligent obedience to the divine call to evangelize all the nations will save Christian America from subjection to

the prevailing passion for riches and luxury and the tendency to sink down into a low, mercenary, self-seeking life. Wealth, consecrated to God and the good of mankind, will make the brightest homes of earth and everlasting habitations of the future. Amid all the conflicts of criticism and the assaults of skepticism it will confirm our faith in the Word of God as the infallible rule of right living, if we try its fitness and efficiency upon nations who have been buried in ignorance and superstition for ages. If we see its power lifting them up to a pure, strong, noble manhood, building them better homes and inspiring them with immortal hopes, we shall not give much heed to men who find mistakes in Moses, and interminglings of truth and error in all the sacred writings. The loud and special call for new recruits to increase the force in the great mission field of the world comes just in time to supply Christian work for thousands of young people, who have declared themselves ready to go wherever in all the earth the Master shall give them work to do. The best evidence of the divine authority of Christianity, and of its fitness to quicken the human mind and to answer all the deepest wants of the human soul, will be found just as fast as we try its renewing and regenerating power upon the lowest and least susceptible of the human race. The battle of the evidences is to be fought in our day not in cloistered halls and in the making of books without end, but in the open field of personal conflict with the powers of darkness in every land. After the work is done, and the world is won for Christ, there will be time enough to theorize and tell how it was done. It is pleasant to read what the critics say about a great poem when once it is written; but all the criticism in the world would never make an *Iliad* or a *Paradise Lost*. Hard, persistent work must be done first by brave men who are not afraid to bear the heat and burden of the day. Theories and speculations will only hinder and hamper the laborers who are breaking up the soil, scattering the seed and gathering in the harvest.

For that great work all things are now ready. A highway for the coming of the King has been cast up in all the waste places of the earth. Strange countries have been explored, rude languages have been reduced to form, schools have been opened, text-books have been prepared, hospitals have been opened, native preachers have been educated, safe ways of living have been learned, access to all classes of people has been gained, the good will of rulers has been won, widespread and earnest expectation has been awakened, urgent and imploring calls for teachers have been elicited from tribes unvisited, the hearts of millions to whom the gospel has never been preached have been prepared to receive the message. Everywhere the impression has been made upon the heathen world that the missionaries bring them a religion of justice in place of wrong, of truth instead of falsehood, of liberty instead of bondage, of love and forgiveness in place of cruelty and hate. All peoples, even the most hostile and prejudiced, have been made to see that Christianity makes nations strong, free, rich, prosperous and happy. A brave, quiet, patient, well-balanced man can go anywhere, make himself known as a Christian, and be honored and trusted for his faith by any people on the face of the earth.

In this great and good day of the Lord's coming we are permitted to live. In the work of making known his truth to a thousand millions of people who are waiting for the message we are called to share. Of all lands on the face of the earth America is the one to which the call comes in the loudest strains, with the most touching persuasion, with the most solemn command. The gospel has done more for us than for any other people in all time, and we are called upon to do most to send its light to those who walk in darkness. Let us accept the high responsibility with thankful hearts. Let us concentrate all our powers and resources upon the work which God has given us to do. Let us train our churches to a higher standard of faith and

consecration. Let us make our preaching a continual proclamation of the vital truths which the heathen are waiting to hear. Let us guard ourselves against the temptation to lead lives of ease and self-indulgence by working till we are weary, and giving to the extent of self-denial. Let us dedicate the harvests of our fields, the income of our trade, the products of our mines and manufactures, the power of our machines and inventions, the income of our labor and investments to the accomplishment of the one work which the world is waiting to have done. Then this generation will not wholly pass away before the Word of salvation will be proclaimed in every language, and to the ends of the earth. Then the East and the West shall join hands across the sea, and the oldest and the newest nations shall be bound together in common bonds of faith, of duty and of love.

THE GAINING OF MEN;

OR,

THE LAW OF ADAPTATION TO ENVIRONMENT IN MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE.

ANNUAL SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

DELIVERED TUESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 10, 1893

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THE GAINING OF MEN;

OR,

THE LAW OF ADAPTATION TO ENVIRONMENT IN MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE.

I VENTURE to ask your attention, Christian fathers and brethren, to the singular, fivefold repetition of four words by the Apostle Paul within the compass of a single short paragraph in the ninth chapter of 1st Corinthians. It is, I believe, the most marked instance of such reiterated emphasis in all Paul's writings, certainly in those which are of unquestioned authenticity.

The words are, "That I might gain," "*That I might gain.*" A sixth time, even, the refrain is repeated in the same connection, with only a slight change, "That I might by all means save." The entire passage reads as follows:

> 1 Cor. ix: 19–23 — 19. For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, *that I might gain* the more.
> 20. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, *that I might gain* the Jews; to them that are under law, as under the law, ("not being myself under the law," as the Revised Version adds) *that I might gain* them that are under the law.
> 21. To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under law to Christ) *that I might gain* them that are without law.
> 22. To the weak became I as weak, *that I might gain* the weak: I am made all things to all men *that I might by all means save some.*
> 23. And this I do for the gospel's sake.

It appears that the autobiography of the Apostle Paul — for the personal allusions in his letters, while fragmentary, surely make up the most vivid autobiography in the Bible —

presents no other passage so clear in its statement of Paul's own view of his missionary errand, and especially of the relations which, in pursuit of it, he sustains toward his environment.

It embodies what has been called Saint Paul's doctrine of "accommodation" to environment — a doctrine, however, so liable to misconception that one half-hesitates to read the passage as our text tonight, lest he should seem to lower the tone of a great occasion like this by some note of undue concession or even compromise of principle; for adaptation to environment, which has come to be a great phrase in our era, has sometimes involved a kind of surrender to environment. In such a time as our own, an arena splendid and novel, full of new and peremptory challenges and demands, we easily forget the end in our attention to the means in conducting the work of great Christian enterprises. The popular cry is, "Adapt yourselves to the times;" "Adjust yourselves to your environment;" "Change your methods;" "Be all things to all men!" and the all-absorbing question becomes this one of adjustment. How to meet the intellectual movement of the time, for example, with its keen and fresh scrutiny of our foundations of faith; or the democratic movement of our time, with what Emerson calls its "pitiless publicity" and its insistence upon popular representation as the basis of administrative or corporate action; or the business movement of our time, with its practical air, its swift changes, and its impatience of traditional technique. But this inevitable anxiety about method often dulls our attention to the spiritual end which is sought. In the field of missionary enterprise the supreme and constant errand — that of the spiritual rescue of men and nations — easily fades from sight in our enforced and eager attention to the combinations of agency by which, in a tremendous and bewildering age, missionary enterprise is to be advanced. But worse than this, the argument for change in method, in response to changed environment, is pressed too far and carried to a most fallacious extreme. The curve

of false reasoning runs like this: We must suit ourselves to the age, it is said; we must give the people what they will understand — *and accept.* So enters the deflecting fallacy under cover of the innocent looking conjunction, and the false argument runs on to say — we must preach a nineteenth-century gospel and meet the times with what the times demand.

Thus, before we know it, the spirit of concession as to method has invaded the texture of the message itself. The heroic strain of fidelity to the truth is relaxed. The old martial gleam fades in the eye of the missionary. Christian daring is succeeded by Christian diplomacy, and the missionary spirit permits itself to be half conquered by the world in order to gain access to the world.

This sidelong sag toward surrender of vital principle makes true men question any doctrine of so-called "accommodation" to the times. But, on the other hand, here in the text is a maxim of the great model missionary, stated with all the force of his eloquence and personal testimony, involving a principle of response to environment which, evidently, he regarded as vital to his success.

What then is this principle of Christian "accommodation," or, as we had better say, of *adaptation* to environment in the work of missions? What are the limitations of its application? What philosophy of the Christian life lies back of it, and how does it apply to the new forces which are remodeling the present epoch? These, honored brethren, are questions which have seemed to me vital enough and peremptory enough to be not wholly inopportune for our consideration tonight.

For the imperfect preparation I have been able to make for their presentation I must crave at your hands a special indulgence. The most shattering blow that can fall on a man fell upon me just as the summer was opening. Death struck upon the dear wife who for twenty-three years had walked by my side. I have no child, and the lonely fight this past summer among the Scottish Highlands to regain

enough of steadiness to meet this duty, to which your more than kind invitation had summoned me, has left scant leisure for that careful study and finished statement which such a theme demands and which a presence such as this preëminently calls for. But what I have, I give. Our subject, then, is this:

THE CHRISTIAN LAW OF ADAPTATION TO ENVIRONMENT IN ITS RELATION TO MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE AT THE PRESENT TIME.

Of course this theme is too large for a single sermon, but let us try, if possible, to discover the single, central principle of St. Paul's teaching upon the subject in the passage before us.

First. We need not delay upon any restatement of the general truth — now the axiom of physics, and accepted also in the critical study of intellectual and moral forces by most modern students — that the progress of life depends, or at least very largely depends, upon this adaptation to environment.

Second. Nor need we linger long upon the further very remarkable fact that Christianity, far more thoroughly than any other of the great religions, approves this law.

Adaptability to environment, without loss of essential quality, is a principle which lies at the marrow of the philosophy of the gospel, and is clearly illustrated in the New Testament. It appears, for example, in the profoundest parables of Jesus concerning the kingdom of God, such as those of the "leaven" and of the "mustard-seed." It appears in such later revelations as Saint Peter's vision at Joppa and address to Cornelius. It appears in the immense yet facile change of policy toward the Gentiles accomplished at the first Church Council at Jerusalem. It shines along the whole career of Paul, and has reappeared at every vital epoch in the Church's history — a certain divine breadth and ease of adjustment to external conditions, wholly unknown in other

religions, which yet impairs not one whit the persistence of essential idea and spirit.

Third. Let me, however, call your more careful attention to a third point, viz., that this unique, double mark of persistence in radical ideal, combined with flexibility of method, has always been supremely manifest in *missionary* enterprise. The noblest Christian missions always exhibit this supreme fidelity and facility side by side.

Ulifas, in his boat on the Danube, carrying the gospel to the Goths in the fourth century; Bishop Claudius, of Turin, "the Protestant of the ninth century," as he has been called, planting the cross amid the snows in the upper valleys of Piedmont; Eliot, two hundred and fifty years ago, in the Massachusetts forests with his Indians; Mackay, of Uganda, in our own time, gentle, brilliant, and brave, cutting his own printing types in the African forest and tolerated by the savage Mwanga only because he was such a master at the forge —all are embodiments of the finished and beautiful power of this double Christian principle, that of variety of method with identity of spirit. And there is reason in this; for the missionary, more than any other minister, stands out on the critical and perilous edge where the gospel meets the heathen world. He, therefore, more than any other man, must employ the Christian art of conciliation without compromise. His task is urgent; his time short; his errand is to save; and with a swift and nimble skill, the secret of which is in the very heart of the Christian genius, he matches his method to the man, yet without sinking a consonant or blurring a vowel in the divine message he is sent to deliver.

Fourth. But missions also supremely illustrate a still further principle which is, I believe, the real heart of the matter—that this wonderful facility of outward adaptation is the *product* as well as the correlative of the inner spiritual earnestness.

Here we come upon the main track of our theme; and the main truth which, if I mistake not, is taught by our text, and which I would venture to emphasize tonight, that

a reinforcement of the *essential missionary spirit*, its vital enthusiasm, its humane ardor, its Christlike passion to save, is the one and the true and the only way in which to *secure* that broad facility in readjustment, that fine adaptation to the new conditions, which is now in demand.

For this breadth and quickness of adaptation to the times, whether it relates to organization or to policy, is a *vital* thing. It must spring from an inner source; it is no matter of outward manipulation; it is the outward glow of an inner fire; it is something too fine to be reached, save as the spontaneous resultant of some holy and beautiful passion of the soul.

It is precisely at this point that we come upon the tremendous sixfold refrain in this passage from the apostle Paul. The passage is often brought forward as the standard justification of variety in mere method; but, if so, it is read *without the refrain.* No more magnificent assertion of the supremacy of end over method was ever uttered. All methods are adopted, according to Saint Paul, "*that he might gain*," "*that he might gain*," and only "*that he might gain*" men. What he means by "gain" men is, as he himself adds, that he might "save" men. And what he means by "save" is, as is evident in all the Pauline writings, the saving men in Christ — the setting up of the image of Christ within them. That is the heart of the Pauline idea; it is the glorious beauty of a spiritual restoration by the introduction of the very power and similitude of the living Christ within men. The burning sense of this thrilling and holy *end* lies back of any Pauline "adjustment" in the use of means. And, brethren, is not a fresh sense of this supreme *end* of missions what we most of all need today, and in it, do we not come to a clear knife-edge beyond which concession to environment or to the spirit of the age must not go, but within which adaptation to environment becomes a spontaneous product of this aroused earnestness to save? It is as though the apostle felt that in admitting such a flexibility in the use of means, he was avowing a principle which would be dangerous in feeble or faithless hands; so, in this refrain he rivets

down, as by repeated hammer-strokes, the sharp rim beyond which the flexible is to become the inflexible. It is as though we were reading a code of military instructions, but reading them in the intervals of a cannon-shot, whose recurrent thunder gives us the sense of the real import of all instructions and of the mass and menace of the foe; or, to take a closer analogy, it is as if the captain of a life-boat were announcing hurried orders to his crew how to turn here and there and handle the boat in the foam; but all spoken *in the boat itself*, and interpreted by the flash of yonder revolving light on the shore, whose gleam shows breaking wreck and drowning men and all the mournful and terrific urgency of the hour.

Method, according to Saint Paul, waits on errand, and it needs no argument to show how this errand to "gain" men and nations in Christ fascinates and fires the great apostle. This it is which gives him that *ingenium perfervidum*, that white-hot passion of service, which *drove* his whole life. All the heavens blazed to him at the thought of gaining a man to Christ. Human literature contains no picture which quite matches this enthusiasm of Paul for his Lord and for saving men in his Lord's name.

It will not do, therefore, to read this passage in a quiet monotone, as though it were a studied schedule of Christian diplomacy, with a little evangelical cadence occurring at intervals. The cadence is the theme. It is the cadence that is controlling. Read it again in this view of it: Among Jews I am Jewish; then comes the cannon-shot "that I might gain Jews." To legalists, I am as a legalist; "that I might gain them that are under the law." To freemen, a freeman, "that I might gain" freemen. To the weak, weak, "that I might gain" the weak. A servant to all, "that I might gain" the more. To every one a comrade, for that is what that phrase "all things to all men" really means, "*that I might by all means save*," and only as shall help me to gain and save.

The object limits the method; the continued identity of

the end limits the play of variety in the use of means. The great iron bridge over the Firth of Forth near Edinburgh, the mightiest bridge in the world, is allowed to slide seven feet on itself to allow for contraction and expansion. If it were rigid it would crush itself under the summer sun or pull itself asunder in the winter frost. As free as the swing of the tree-bough is the seven-foot slide upon itself of that enormous mass of iron; but it must be all along one line and groove, not by the fraction of an inch outside of that. So of the free slide of Christian adaptation to environment. The majestic and intense idea of gaining the soul determines the limits of variation in the way of approaching the soul. But we go further. The exact point is here. These fine adaptations of method are the *spontaneous products* of devotion to such an end as this; for the end is not to gain converts but to gain *men*, to recreate the true glory of the soul by bringing Christ into men and informing them with his lovely and lofty image.

Now, an end like this is so enkindling and exalted, so on the very ridge of human aspiration and power, that even to conceive it gives breadth and play to a man's faculty, and wholly to seek it reacts into the utmost spring and readiness of resource, like a climb in the hills. Realizing such an errand, the missionary approaches men with the supreme ease of a fearless friendliness, and a missionary society arranges its policy with a gentle largeness in which is the very genius of real adaptation, and yet without a hint of surrender of principle.

Missionary measures and policies, then, are not compromises, inventions, devices, studies in attitude, so much as they are the natural attitudes of the real wrestler, the real rescuer. This impulse to save is *the* thing in Christianity — the heart of its heart, like the "inmost purple spirit of light," to use Shelley's phrase — and this when felt *creates* adaptation as the target attracts the shot. Only kindle that saving passion in a man, admit intellect to it, and he cannot help adapting himself to the circumstances of the case. The

thing to pray for is not the adaptation but the fire. Facility waits on fervor. (Perhaps a lack of this fire is the reason why some of our laborious modern "adaptations" are so ineffective.)

And the Christian philosophy which underlies all this is that simple yet noble philosophy to which now the minds of Christian people in many lands are turning. Christianity is a life, a personal and divine life, reproduced in a human life; an incarnation — first, of God in Christ, and then of Christ in believing man.

Now this life of God, reproduced through Christ in man, is reproduced in *man, i.e.*, it stands related to what is generic and universal in human nature and in man; and our methods become at once easily varied and free when we seek the generic and universal. The life of God in the soul of man is beneath subsidiary forms of statement on the side of the message and of manners on the side of the man. What is merely relative, provisional, fugitive, in either direction, in the dialect of the message or the manners of the man, the missionary knows himself free to deal with as circumstances require, else we could not even translate the Scriptures. But the heart of the message must reach the heart of the man. These remain the same. The missionary stands, then, for the identity and brotherhood of man everywhere and for the identity of the gospel everywhere. Here is the philosophical ground for the magnificent and unique combination of facility and fidelity which we observe in the best missionary service — a feature which is always lost in the mere propaganda. Loyalty to the Christian faith is never sacrificed. It was this very Paul who said he made himself "all things to all men" who also said "God hath made of one blood all nations of men," and who also said, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other doctrine, let him be anathema." Paul's doctrine of adaptation must be interpreted by Paul's own practice; and as to that practice, there was more of constancy in it than of change. Never for a moment did that swift and martial life lose its battle-rush, under any cau-

tion or concession of diplomacy. Always outspoken, firm, and valiant, he suppressed nothing of the main truth of his message to avoid danger or conflict. The real message must reach the real man, and no "adaptation" is admissible which for a moment dulls or delays this vivid and vital contact.

Such, in rough statement, I understand to be Saint Paul's principle of adaptation — what we may call the Christian law of adaptation in connection with missions. It is an adaptation which is both subordinate to a spiritual end and is itself the spontaneous product of aroused fidelity to that end.

Now, before seeking, in the closing paragraphs, to apply this principle to the question of the great and novel forces which are reshaping the conditions of missionary work in our day, I venture to burden your patience for a moment by way of showing how brilliantly the *history of missions* confirms the view here presented — that the broadest variety and facility in method spring from the intense evangelical earnestness of the underlying motive. When the true spiritual end of gaining men for Christ has been lost sight of in the zeal of the propagandist or the partisan, then methods have become cumbrous and artificial. But the true missions, from the time of Saint Paul to the present, *have* been full of a certain supremacy of essentials, a cheerful ardor, a vivid and happy sense of Christ and his good news for men, a central glow so gracious and humane that awkwardness and stiffness of address and policy became impossible.

You know how it was at the very beginning. Other hands caught Saint Paul's falling torch and carried it far and wide, for the true "apostolic succession" was the *missionary* succession. The nimble and winged Greek tongue received the most precious treasure ever committed to a language — the story of the cross.

Scattered by winds of persecution, which, as we are accustomed to say, both winnowed the wheat and sowed it through the earth, Christians went everywhere, and the name "Christian" became synonymous with "missionary."

Then ensued that wonderful dissemination of the gospel, never paralleled in the history of religions. We see that missionary torch, Paul's old torch, flying along the great Roman roads, in the wake of armies, on the margin of caravans; soldiers and sailors pass it from hand to hand. Across the African desert, up the windings of the Nile, out along the Red Sea to Yemen and India, across Mesopotamia to Persia, north into the vast forests of Dacia, over the snowy redoubt of the Alps into Gaul, and beyond Gaul, even, to where the misty islands of Britain fronted the prophetic pulsing of the western sea — everywhere in those early centuries went the missionary messenger of the cross, and everywhere in his track we find a certain bright charm of manner and address which is the spontaneous product of his living sense of his wonderful message.

Irenæus, writing from the upper Rhone in the second century, says: "Though the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the import of the tradition in them all is one and the same." "The haunts of the Britons," writes Tertullian in the third century, "inaccessible to the Roman arms, are accessible to Christ." The spirit of Pentecost, vital yet varied, like mingled wind and fire, inspired believers and ran throughout the world, catching every man's vernacular, swiftly meeting every local condition, everywhere apparently provincial because everywhere so deeply cosmopolitan, mobile and facile because human and divine, until by the opening of the fourth century ten millions of Christians were numbered in the Roman Empire in place of the barely half million at the close of the first century.

In each of the three following centuries, the fourth, fifth, and sixth, one missionary achievement of the first class carries on the same deep lesson — that *felicity in the handling of missions is the fruit of spiritual earnestness.* These three superb achievements were the mission of Ulfilas to the Goths, in the fourth century; that of Patrick to Ireland in the fifth century; that of Columba to Scotland, in the sixth century.

There is no time to speak of them in detail. As varied

as the peoples addressed, free and natural yet amazingly effective in method, were these missions, in which the facile adaptation plainly grew out of the spirit of Christlike love for man which possessed these three great missionaries. This appears in the letters of Patrick, the missionary to Ireland. He was a heroic and fascinating personality. Born in Brittany, he was in his youth captured by pirates and carried to Ireland and used as a slave, finally escaping, then returning voluntarily under the irresistible desire to preach Christ among the rude barbarians whom he had known as a bondman.

"My friends tried to prevent me," he writes, "saying, 'Why does this man rush into danger among the heathen?' . . But God conquered in me and I withstood them, and I went to preach the gospel to the people of Ireland, where I am ready to give up my life with joy for Christ's name's sake." He established perhaps three hundred churches aud kindled a light that illumined all Western Europe for three hundred years, giving to Ireland its title of *Insula Sanctorum*, and he accomplished this by what we should call a marvelous skill in adaptation. He entered the cabins of the common people, adopted their manner of life, met their prejudices, winning all by a certain gentleness and even gayety, hitting to a nicety the nerve of the Celtic race, and yet moved by such an ardor that he says, "In one day I offered a hundred prayers and in the night almost as many, and in the mountains I rose up to pray in the snow, ice, and rain before daybreak, yet I felt no pain, for the spirit glowed within me."

Then, in the century still following, we have the intellectual mission of Columba, perhaps the most marvelous of the three. He was an Irishman of the noble blood of Ulster. In the spirit of penance for his own fiery temper he came from Ireland with twelve followers, and in 563 A.D. established a mission to the Picts on the wild and stormy west coast of Scotland. The little islet of Iona, where Columba set up his school, became the Scottish Patmos, and its beautiful cross, the "cross of Iona," became the immortal Christian

blossom on that rough coast, telling to this day the story of that wonderful mission — a mission heroic, intellectual, evangelical — training students, translating the Scriptures, sending out missionaries all over Western Europe, maintaining a free and spiritual conception of Christianity, and even holding out against the authority of the Vatican for two hundred years.

Now, the thing that shines out in connection with each of these three astonishing missions, different entirely as they are in time and type, is the very thing we are speaking of tonight — an *extraordinary breadth and freedom of adaptation of method to environment* combined with *equally marked purity and earnestness of evangelical spirit.* The inference is demonstrative that this spirit itself, the spiritual enthusiasm to save in Christ's name, *produced* the bold and easy play of agency and method, the winning felicities of manner, the subtle appositeness in meeting circumstances and addressing men.

Then, later on, we have in a sadder story the same truth illustrated conversely. There arose the strange menace of the crescent in the east; the Saracen captured the Holy Sepulcher, the Moor came to Spain, and Europe passed into the din and clang of those iron centuries of the Crusades. Missionary activity did not cease, but it lost its spiritual tone, and also, in the same ratio, its felicity of method. We look in vain for the humane sympathy of Patrick or the intellectual freedom of Columba. Missions became politico-ecclesiastical. Force and diplomacy became the substitutes for the beautiful charm of natural adaptation, and accordingly missions relatively failed.

But the meridian of history changed in Europe. God shifted in a night the hinges of his doors. The great focus and pivot of affairs was transferred from the eastern rim of Europe to the western. In 1492, Boabdil, the last of the Moorish monarchs, fled from Spain, and the cross shone in the halls of the Alhambra. In that same year the finger of God's providence made of the deep a furrow, and pointed

the path before three little boats in which Columbus set forth upon the mighty voyage whose issue after four hundred years this nation celebrates in its Columbian Festival. Twenty-five years later Martin Luther nailed his theses to the church door in Wittenberg, and the tremendous sixteenth century came marching in like an army with banners. In the south, the classic Rennaisance; in the north, the German Reformation; in the west, the Titanic burst of the Elizabethan era, and as the result of all a new volume opened for the world and for Christ! Christianity discovered that the world was round, and for the first time wholly took its problem up into its hands. Still, missionary activity, while often laborious and heroic, was ecclesiastical rather than evangelical in its notion of the end to be attained. Its methods accordingly were still artificial, and the results in the way of permanent spiritual conquest were largely barren. The Latin Church at this period sent out whole regiments of missionaries — many of them most devoted men — to India and Japan and to the new lands, to South America, Mexico, and the Indian tribes of the far north, when men like Brebeuf, René Ménard, and Marquette endured incredible hardship. These Roman Catholic brethren, also, are of the noble army of martyrs. Japan was claimed to be "Christianized." In India Xavier baptized alleged converts till his arms sank exhausted in the act of baptizing. But these, also, were not altogether spiritual conquests. The spirit that governed them was not always a passion to save men from sin in Christ's name. It was often a passion to multiply adherents to a church — the spirit of the propaganda. And accordingly this degeneration of end produced a degeneration of means. These agents of the propaganda "adapted" too much. Legitimate concession becomes illegitimate surrender, and these Latin missions of the sixteenth century to a large extent failed and fell, ending in Japan in frightful tragedy; in Mexico, and some of the South American States, sinking in the swamps of native vices; in India — under Robert de Nobili — conceding so much to Brahminic caste as to become "more Brahminic than Christian."

But a new spirit arose. Early in the eighteenth century the little Moravian Church at Herrnhut resolved itself into a missionary "committee of the whole." The political and ecclesiastical conception of the mission gives way before the return of the apostolic and spiritual. The true unit of missionary enterprise becomes again the saving of a man in Christ.

In 1789 William Carey landed in India, and the modern Protestant mission was born. And since that epoch this last one hundred years of Protestant missions is one long, splendid demonstration of the same Pauline maxim that facility and efficiency of adaptation to environment is the natural *fruit* of the Christian passion to save.

What magnificent expositions of this principle have been seen in the history of this American Board. The most noble and daring of them all is, perhaps, the translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular of hundreds of peoples; for what is this but the broadest and most fearless "adaptation to environment," yet without losing a single note in Paul's old cry, "That I might gain," "That I might save."

No words can do justice to the magnificent splendor of this achievement of translation and to its significant bearing upon the point before us tonight. For it might easily be said and plausibly argued that we should lose what is characteristic in Christianity in committing its delicate and spiritual message to the meager and coarse syllables of a savage tongue; that translation, even, is adaptation carried too far. For languages reproduce psychologies. The wide gulfs that separate whole races run up between their linguistic forms, and one might maintain that the very essence of a given idea is bound up in a given language and confined to that language.

The French "Dieu" is not quite the Saxon "God." It has been a question with our missionaries what Chinese word to choose out of nine possible combinations to represent the supreme name. Can the sublime Jehovah of the Hebrew writings, it might be asked, be made known in Malay, and the finished Christ of the Greek Testament be reproduced

in Choctaw? And what words has the Zulu of South Africa into which the mighty logic of the Epistle to the Romans can be hammered?

Never mind, has been the reply of this American Board, as of all the great Protestant societies. The gospel is as universal as man. So widely humane is it, so intimately vital to all men, that even the variations of a hundred dialects are subordinate after all. We *dare* to fling this gospel out to the winds of any century, out to the native handling of any people. Christianity can stand universal translation. It can be preached in every man's vernacular. It is doubtful whether the iron fatalism of the Moslem literature can be reproduced in the free energy of Saxon. It is more than doubtful whether the mystic subtlety of Buddhism can be put into the finished and brilliant precision of the French. But Christianity may be preached in Arabic or Hindi as well as in French or English. What ampler or bolder testimony is possible to the principle under discussion, that the philosophy of Christianity unites consistent adherence to the central idea with infinite adaptation of form to environment?

Surely the deep logic of the past history of the American Board tends toward a noble and yet safe liberality in meeting the fresh environment of new times.

In the same line of illustration, also, is the immense confidence with which the American Board has in these later decades more and more intrusted the gospel to native pastors, managing their own native churches. Does it not seem as though the seal of God's approval has been put upon this idea of intrusting the gospel to the native handling of the nations? It is not necessary to denationalize a people in order to Christianize them. At first the theory was different. The American Board in an early Annual Report, for the year 1816, I think, declared the object of the mission among the Indians to be "to make them *English in their language*,[1] civilized in their habits, and Christian in their religion."

[1] The italics are ours.

Now, on the contrary, this Board says to the children of Japan: Remain Japanese if you will, but be Christian. You do not require to come into the kingdom of heaven *via* the English language alone, or *via* the local idiosyncrasies of Western civilization. You can be your own Oriental selves and yet be evangelical Christians. You can realize your best national ideals and yet be Christian. The missionary is no foe to local patriotism.

Finally, then, may we not bring this Pauline principle — that the finest and broadest adaptation to environment in the conduct of missions has its true source in the loving earnestness to gain men in Christ — into the great and thrilling arena of the present hour, and ask how it applies to missionary enterprise now, in the midst of our novel and exciting conditions of life, and especially in view of four special forces of our epoch, which are, perhaps as prominent and positive as any.

For the critical and urgent question which confronts us and crowds upon us, is really this: Can our missionary work adapt itself, *without loss*, to this modern environment, and, if so, how, and how far?

Beneath our special discussions is this real question of *readjustment* at various points to what we call the "spirit of our time." What readjustments, if any, are appropriate, for example, in view of the spirit of critical inquiry as to matters of doctrine? What readjustments, if any, does the democratic and socially representative spirit of our age call for? These are specimens of questions where the light glitters on the weapon's edge in current debate. My office is surely not to enlarge upon these special questions, but to voice your deeper and common feeling in referring them all to a still more commanding principle, the law, as we have tried to trace it, of *all* adjustment to environment in missionary enterprise; that we are first to gain a certain fresh sense of our holy and thrilling missionary *errand* before we are fitly prepared even to enter upon these questions of adjustment, and that when we are once fairly *possessed* with our errand

in Paul's way and in Christ's name, the "adjustments" will already have half accomplished themselves.

It is along the line of Saint Paul's thrilling, sixfold cry, "That I might gain," "*That I might gain*" that we shall best approach the immediate questions of the present hour.

One can scarcely go amiss in selecting these four among the chief new forces of our time:

First. The spirit of free rational inquiry and criticism.

Second. The spirit of industrial enterprise by the aid of applied science.

Third. The spirit of representative government under forms of a social democracy.

Fourth. The spirit of humanitarian relief and reform.

These rapidly closing moments will permit only the briefest glance upon these four tendencies, but we must hold that to them, also, our principle applies. They are all within the compass of legitimate missionary use and adaptation, but such a vast adaptation can only be accomplished through the channel of a profoundly quickened and deepened earnestness in the work of missions itself.

I. As to the intellectual and critical movement of the age, the attitude of the missionary spirit may be, on the one hand, absolutely fearless and friendly, while on the other hand it holds this intellectual movement in clear subordination to its own still larger spiritual end. For the intellect is a part, but only a part, of the spirit. In the great Oriental mission fields scientific agnosticism is powerfully affecting the native thought, while here at home the new Biblical criticism has brought upon all classes of religious societies perhaps their sharpest strain of difference and debate; and how to adjust the operations of a missionary society to this critical tendency is plainly a task of great delicacy and difficulty.

But the voice of our argument at this point is perfectly clear, and in it there is both a liberal and a conservative note. On the one hand, and so far as the movement of the time is truly intellectual, the missionary sympathizes with it. He should meet the intellectual unbeliever with a finer intellec-

tualism even than his own, and if he is dead earnest, and *live earnest* too, to gain the *whole* soul to Christ, he *will* incorporate in his work this finer intellectualism.

Let us never forget that Christianity is intellectual. Never a school without a chapel, but never a chapel without a school. Christianity is, let us repeat, a *life*, and a part of that life is thought, and there cannot be any real thought unless it is free thought. We sometimes say "*free* intelligence." Intelligence is not intelligence unless it is free. In our time a religion must take thought on board or fail. Christianity is the only religion that dares to take thought in its integrity on board. Protestantism is the free and spiritual union of unfettered intelligence and fervent faith, without detriment to either. It is not the invention of the sixteenth century. It was born in the first birth of the rational soul, and it shone in the finished intuition of Jesus and in his boldly doing away with the letter of the ancient code while he fulfilled its spirit.

The Protestant missionary, then, in meeting the free thought of the age, simply meets outside of himself that which is an integral factor within himself. He is to be at home beneath the illumined dome of the twentieth century, because he is himself a part of that illumination.

So much, then, is admitted and gladly urged, that our missions have no quarrel with the spirit of rational criticism if only it be genuinely rational, that is, unprejudiced and devoted to truth. But, on the other hand, the missionary spirit insists that all speculation, with which in itself it has no quarrel, shall yet be subordinate to the practical errand of saving men.

The missionary has little leisure to examine the mere nebulæ in the theological skies. He leaves that to his brother at home in the seminary. Somebody should count threads, but not the man who is running with the life-line. The missionary is the ordinary minister, minus a little speculation and plus a little urgency. He has his freedom of thought certainly, but he is engaged in the imminent wrestle

to rescue a man or a nation from moral death, and he wishes to think to some practical purpose. The possibilities of the unrevealed future, for example, engross his attention as little as does the weather of tomorrow the attention of a fireman who dashes into a burning house to save a child. The text would teach us, I feel sure, that the main missionary motive is not drawn from any speculation whatever as to the future. That motive is drawn from Christ and from the preciousness of man and the possibility of saving him *now* by bringing the image of Christ's manhood into him. Here is the glowing heart of the Pauline idea — to save a man *now*, from his sins, in Christ; to rescue a nation *now*, from its degradation, in Christ. This is the commanding and flaming conception. The eschatological forecast, prominent as it should be, is not the *most* prominent factor in the consciousness of the missionary.

The missionary spirit insists on the perspective of immediate service, and in the instant blaze of this great foreground certain horizon questions lose relative importance. And *for the very same reason* the missionary spirit condemns, not severely, some hesitancy of attitude upon these horizon questions. It is gently tolerant of marginal misgivings so long as they do not intrude upon this peremptory perspective of immediate service, but not tolerant of them when they do thus intrude.

For we are like men "lying awake in the dark" and listening, to use Bishop Leighton's beautiful image, in regard to many of these questions of the future life. Our minds fail us. We cannot straighten out everything. You remember William Whewell's quaint line

> "There is no force, however great,
> Can stretch a cord, however fine,
> Into a horizontal line
> That shall be accurately straight."

And surely, dear brethren, in view of our urgent text, may we not say this: It is not so much whether a man's con-

jecture inclines *this* way or *that* way upon some secondary point concerning which little is said in the Scripture, as whether the man holds *either opinion*, whether pro or con, as of little moment compared with the tremendous mid-rush of Christian motive to win men now and conquer the nations for Christ before the firing of the sunset gun, which shall determine the fitness of a man to be Christ's missionary.

II. As to the movement of what we call the industrial enterprise of our time by the aid of applied science. The missionary sustains a similar attitude of glad welcome and acceptance of these novel and brilliant energies as allies to the spread of the gospel, but only so far as they are kept subordinate to the end of the spiritual rescue of men.

As to physical science itself, if genuine, it must be an ally not an enemy to a religion whose gracious hammock is swung between the two towers of the incarnation and the resurrection. At these two critical points of doctrine, where honor to physical nature blends with faith in God, the coming age is to reveal, I believe, a profound community of ground between our scientific friends and ourselves; and then, too, the instruments which science has given to enterprise — the engine, the press, the telephone, in whose mysterious echoes speech repeats itself a thousand miles away — all these spreading in the wake of commerce over the world not only break up the stubborn masses of heathen custom but add agencies of incalculable power to the service of the gospel itself.

Business sagacity also, executive skill, inventive genius, the alert, combining, creative mind, are both welcomed and developed in the missionary arena, but all "that we may gain" men. Missionary enthusiasm may "adapt" itself to a business age, and, brethren, suffer me to say that the best adaptation to a business age is a *great advance in giving*. We hear of "retrenchment." The very stones of the missions cry against this enforced retrenchment.

Read the "*Cry from the Missions*," the most terribly eloquent document ever laid before our anniversaries. Let

us heed that cry. "Reducing contributions" is drawing missionary blood.

In reference to one great field of missionary effort, hitherto the most impenetrable, perhaps, and obdurate of all — the field of the Moslem — might we not hazard the conjecture that perhaps the application of science to enterprise — or, in a word, *machinery* — is destined to be the most effective possible ally to the Christian faith, for machinery is the embodied victory of mind over matter, or, to put it in another way, of will over fate, and Mohammedanism is fatalism. Machinery is the natural antithesis of Mohammedanism.

Mr. Edward Sell, writing in the last August *Contemporary* of the "New Islam," approves the effort of certain younger Moslem scholars to bring Islam into accord with the progressive tendencies of the times. The attempt will be futile. When some years ago in Cairo I visited the great Mosque of El-Lazar, where thousands of Arab students are taught the Koran, and saw these boys and youth seated in little groups on the broad floor of the Mosque, each one swinging his body backward and forward as he again and again rehearsed the passage in a vacant and mindless recitative, I said: This is not a religion; it is a mental despotism, almost a monomania. It is the paralysis of a fatalistic creed, as if physically forced upon the very fiber and function of the brain. "Fixed, from the very outset," says Dr. Kuenen, "this is the character of Islam."

Now, machinery in an instant shatters this rigid code, for progress begins with a blow struck back at fate, and machinery is the triumph of such a blow.

But a higher and still more apposite instance is at hand of this legitimate adaptation of modern missions to the scientific environment, where the adaptation is plainly the *product* (as it is my main purpose tonight to argue) — the product of the great Christian thought of rescue. We find this instance under the flag of our own Board in the figure of the missionary *physician* — for the crown and bloom of modern applied science is in the field of medicine; and one

of the peculiar glories of modern Protestant missions, and of this American Board, is the educated missionary physician.

Never the church without the school, we have said. Never either without the hospital. "The church and the hospital must come together to the Orient," said Dr. Post to me in the operating room of the great and noble hospital at Beirut.

I love to think of the missionary physician, and for what he stands today — one of the most magnificent products of these centuries. On the scientific side he in his profession of medicine occupies that wonderful focal point whither all the bright paths of modern physics and scientific discovery converge — the Square of Saint Mark's in the Venice of Science — and he stands there *in Christ's name*. Reading the human frame beneath this searching and splendid illumination, knowing its laws and its perils, and treating its diseases as a way of Christian approach to the man himself, he embodies the very genius of the scientific age in its noblest field of practical operation, while yet he is not in the least thereby chilled in his errand of winning men to Christ; on the contrary, it is the spirit of the cross which has produced him and placed him where he is. Becoming man's physician, he ceases not to be Christ's missionary. Along a channel cleared, not clogged, by scientific enthusiasm, pours the old Christian passion to "save," and he stands forth by the side of his preaching brother, sharing with him in the one royal and overmastering ardor to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

III. Only a word can be said upon the third great new force of our time, though it deserves many.

"We are living in the sociological age of the world," writes Dr. Josiah Strong in his recent and most stirring book, *The New Era*. Indeed, the question now is not one even of democracy but of a *new* democracy. To the democracy of individualism, with which we are familiar, has succeeded a subtle and powerful rival — the democracy of

socialism — and around this distinction rages a cyclone of discussion and dissension.

The agitation of these theories is beginning to affect some of our most important missionary fields, while here at home, in this drift towards social coöperation and representative control, we come upon what is a living question for us in this Board — the question between a corporate nucleus and an outlying popular constituency.

But on this field, also, the missionary spirit stands with a discriminating sympathy, and here, as everywhere, the guide to the true adjustment is to be found in the same freshened sense of the breadth and depth and holy splendor of our missionary errand, while on the field the true missionary finds in the instant wrestle to save men in Christ the source of the true social enthusiasm. The true missionary will never repeat that error of "too much politics" which characterized the Latin missions of the sixteenth century in India and Japan. He does not meddle with the civic relations of governments to their subjects, and yet, as representing the fellowship of Christ, he is in sympathy with the people and with popular liberty. He does not approve that "dropping down deadness" of manner which, you remember, Sidney Smith said some bishops liked in their clergy, and which despots desire in their subjects. On the other hand, however, he stands for order and for law, for good manners and social refinement, and for the finished results of accumulated resources and a stable civilization. His sense of human brotherhood in Christ attracts him to what is true in the new democratic and social ideals, while at the same time his sense of the separate beauty and value of each individual soul guards him against their false and fantastic extremes.

Thus the missionary becomes a social mediator between extremes of opinion, and from his lonely and critical and often perilous field of toil, in his balance of judgment and breadth of sympathy, he voices this final maxim of the nobler democracy, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." May it not even be true that

just as in applied science and in machinery we find the natural ally of the cross against the crescent, so in the modern spirit of popular liberty and social coöperation we are to find the natural ally of the cross against caste, which is the practical fastness of the ancient superstitions of India. The local franchise and experiments in social coöperation are true correlatives of that blessed gospel before which, thus supported and recommended, the subtle sorcery of caste must dissolve and disappear.

IV. Last of all, we meet one of the most remarkable movements of our age in the call for a larger and wider philanthropy. Stirring among the noble-hearted sons and daughters of our times, of every class and special creed, in England, Sweden, Germany, America, we observe the spirit of a new philanthropy, whose specific note is the scientific analysis of social conditions as the prerequisite to a wise effort to relieve them. Within a dozen years a new literature, almost, has arisen in order to expound this new movement of humanitarian reform, to state its problems, record its experiments, and tabulate its results.

But surely no argument is needed to show that as a Christian missionary realizes the breadth and beauty of his own errand and enters into the spirit of the cross, in that proportion he comes into touch with this philanthropic movement, also, in its very finest form; for the spirit of Christ is not that of a blind self-sacrifice, but is that of intelligent as well as sacrificial service to the whole man, body and soul.

The true genesis of philanthropy in its connection with religious faith is well given in the words of Florence Nightingale: "If I could give you any information of my life," she says, "it would be to show how a woman of very ordinary ability has been led by God, in strange and unaccustomed paths, *to do, in his service, what he has done in her.*" These words of the heroine of the Crimea sound like an echo of Saint Paul, where he says, "To reveal his Son in me that I might preach him among the Gentiles."

The word philanthropy, then, is only a Greek name for

one side of missionary effort. It is only a milestone on the road out to where Saint Paul, that strange and fiery scholar, stands, burning with a passion of rescue, listening at night across the Ægean to the cry for help from Macedon, and exclaiming, as the keynote of all his many-toned ministry, "That I might gain," "That I might by all means save."

The new philanthropy is only a part of that splendid and supreme conception of saving a man to Christ and in Christ, which, whether on the old Asian shore or in the heat and rush of today, is the divine glory of life.

Riding at nightfall, some years ago, through the long, dim archway that leads into the ruins of the great temple at Baalbec, an old Scotchman of our party missed his way and struck heavily against a projecting beam or fragment of rock. He was thrown from his horse, and lay stunned and bleeding. No adequate medical aid was at hand. We did for him what we could, and after he had recovered consciousness we bound up in a rude way his wounds, which were serious, and next morning we placed the pale and suffering old man in a palanquin and set out to carry him over the mountains to Beirut. It was a weary march. As we crossed the plain and came under the foot-hills of the Lebanon Mountains I saw a horseman far above us, riding straight toward us down the steep mountain side. I thought at first he must be a man of the desert, so daringly and magnificently he rode, his horse leaping down from point to point and falling upon our little caravan almost like a bolt out of the heavens. But he raised his cap and spoke in English. "I hear you have had an accident," said he, "for bad news travels fast across the plain. I am Dale, of Zahleh" —a name now starred in the glorious annals of American missionaries and of the Syrian mission — "and I rode down the mountain to tell you to bring the injured gentleman *straight up to my house* in the mission at Zahleh on the hill. We will take care of him, and have a doctor out from Beirut to attend him, and when he is able set him on his way."

I looked at the speaker and thought I was in sight of

something higher and whiter than the snow summits of Lebanon. Gerald Dale, of Zahleh! I see him now as I saw him then, his cap off, his hair tossed back, his eye flashing with the daring of his precipitous ride, his splendid horse all in a foam — the light of the morning flaming across the fine, chiseled face, the very incarnation of Christian chivalry and philanthropy — Christ's true knight, promptly and wisely offering the best he had to a suffering stranger in manhood's and Christ's name.

Brethren, I have spoken too long, and yet not long enough unless I have been able to throw into relief this simple idea that a Christian mission today may and should adapt itself to the freshest and strongest forces of the times we live in, but that the *missionary spirit itself*, a certain living and loving earnestness to gain men in Christ, is the *true source* of breadth and felicity of method in accomplishing this adaptation.

We are in the whirl of a tremendous epoch. If missionary enterprise is to adapt itself to this epoch it must be not by devices and compromises and subtleties of policy, but by the deep reënforcement of the old Pauline ardor to save men in Christ. Only the eternal love of the cross can *produce* the true genius of adaptation in winning men — the quick apprehension, the fine responsiveness, the spontaneous grace of address, and in policy the large yet safe measures of true progress.

As to these four great features in the life of our time — the spirit of intellectual freedom and rational criticism, the spirit of science and its application to industrial enterprise, the spirit of a representative and social democracy, the spirit of humanitarian reform — I must believe that our Christian missions may meet them and, in a sense, may incorporate them all.

But, O brethren, what a *fervent heat at the center* is requisite to balance the dispersive tendencies of such broad adaptations and maintain the one end of saving men in Christ regnant to the outermost tip and filament of all

this immense array of novel and brilliant relations and agencies.

Only a *passion* to save can make the end to master the method in such a time as this, but such a passion is attainable, and the way to attain it is surely evermore the same old way — draw closer to God and closer to man, or, in one word, draw closer to Christ, who is both God and man.

The attitude of the missionary or the missionary supporter resembles that of the orchestral performer, who in one quick, infallible second glances from the midst of the intricate score to the beat of the baton of his leader; so, in the midst of the bewildering score of the modern age, the true man of missions fixes his eye upon Christ and upon Christ's errand to save, and in the thrilling supremacy of that one idea he finds the key to a practical answer in all questions of detail.

I confess, honored brethren, that I have thus construed your demand upon me at the present moment, that, in view of all the critical considerations of the hour, the fittest service I might render would not be to attempt to pursue any side-track of special discussion, still less to seek any novelties of address, but simply to invoke afresh the old splendor of the missionary enthusiasm; for it surely is the true solvent of all difficulties, the true guide to wise and happy adjustments. To realize it anew, in all its ancient fervor, will surely, more than anything else, exalt this anniversary, give harmony to its counsels and practical force to its decisions, making it a blessing to our churches throughout the land and to our mission stations throughout the world.

I invoke, then, in Christ's name, on this occasion, in closing, the *missionary spirit*. Springing from the depths of the great incarnation it enters, as Christ himself enters, into the souls of his disciples, becoming there a passion for rescue in his name. Unlike the proselytizing zeal of other religions, it seeks not to capture the man but to renew him. It sees man in Christ and Christ in man, whom it at once honors and pities and yearns over with that strange *donum*

lachrymarum — that "gift of tears" — of which the old Fathers speak. As in a kind of glowing and unworldly vision, it realizes at once the love of God, the worth of man, the woe of sin, the nameless power and pathos of the cross, and it rushes forth with a lover's heart and a hero's will to bring the cross to the sin — the Saviour to the man.

In this rush to save all lesser things take lower places. Difficulties are as nothing. Oceans, deserts, are crossed; jungles are pierced; obscure dialects are mastered. Dangers do not daunt, nor long delays exhaust, nor even failures chill this missionary ardor. It sings in the music of the immortal lands. It can receive a blow with a smile, and it gazes with a strange eagerness into every human face in order to detect there, beneath whatever degradation, the latent glory of the soul, and establish there the new similitude of the Lord. It is at once devoted and daring. Its spokesman is Paul, who is the father of the chivalric in Christian missions, to whom nothing is quite Christian unless it stirs the blood, whose words leap and tingle.

"I go bound in spirit," he cries; "I am debtor to Greek and barbarian;" "I am an ambassador in bonds;" "I am in travail until Christ be formed in you;" and, with a still more unmeasured intensity, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren."

We rejoice in Keswick conventions and summer Bible readings, and, on the other hand, we rejoice in the critical discussions of true scholars concerning the Scriptures. The cult of holiness and the search after truth are noble things, and the light on the brow of both saint and scholar is lovely to see; but must not all issue in this one tremendous note of practical wrestle to save?

Down there on the wet sand with the life-boat is the place for a Christian, and nothing so touches the very missionary marrow as that low cry through the lips of the veteran Paul, "I could wish that I myself were *anathema* from Christ for my brethren."

Let this, then, be the constant refrain of our anniversary,

"That I might gain," "That I might gain," "That I might by all means save." Our debates about method will then be like the earnest conference of a rescue party hurrying to the relief of imperiled men, for otherwise we lose the perspective of all discussion, unless we repeat at every interval Paul's great cry.

If, then, we are conservative, let us be so "that we may gain;" if liberal, let us be so "that we may gain." In the thought of the *man* yonder, and the CHRIST *yonder*, we grasp hands, and we shall go back to our churches with a spirit that shall make that ideal million a year for foreign missions a solid actuality even in hard times, and that vision of a score of new men from our seminaries for the foreign field an immediate and blessed fact.

We shall relight every torch. We shall find the true *method* in realizing the true *end* of missionary enterprise, and, best of all, this beloved Missionary Board not only will continue to be, but will become even afresh the channel of a divine energy, the humble bearer into all the earth of a holy power — a power real as Orion, intimate as motherhood, overmastering as the sea — the power of Christ to save.

GOD'S GRANT TO THE GENTILES

ANNUAL SERMON

BEFORE THE

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS

DELIVERED AT

MADISON, WISCONSIN, OCTOBER 10, 1894

BY THE

REV. T. EATON CLAPP, D.D.

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, MANCHESTER, N. H.

PUBLISHED BY THE BOARD

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"AND WHEN THEY HEARD THESE THINGS, THEY HELD THEIR PEACE, AND GLORIFIED GOD, SAYING, THEN TO THE GENTILES ALSO HATH GOD GRANTED REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE."—*Acts xi: 18.*

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN:

The pulpit of our beloved American Board is sacred for its associations. The occupant is compassed about by a cloud of venerated and glorified witnesses, who hold him in full survey. For more than eighty years one and another has prayed to be sent to you with a message moved by the Holy Ghost, and so profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in the righteousness of missions.

We are, so we believe, commissioners of the very heart of the work of the Lord — work which angels would love to perform. "If Christianity is heroic life, the missionary work is heroic Christianity." No men ever more needed wisdom or more felt their insufficiency to fit foreign timber into the building of God. No men ever craved more to be without shame when the awful fire test shall be submitted. May the infinite Maker and Builder speak to us on this latest anniversary occasion, so that as men of God we may be thoroughly furnished for the work of our hands in this new time! May all the mighty motives that inspired and constrained the select master builders of sacred story — "the recompense of reward," "the unseen and eternal," "Him who is invisible," "the Son of man standing at the right hand of God," "the love of Christ"—salute our uplifted eyes as we gird up our loins for another missionary tour around the world!

Nor do we forget our representative character. Loyal to the fathers of this venerable Board, we eschew, as Job eschewed evil, the most ragged remnant of aught save an obedient trusteeship for the brotherhood of churches, whose plant the Board is and evermore shall be. Churches, not boards, are collectively the body, the bride, of Christ. Upon her the Holy Ghost fell in the radiant Christian beginning; in her he abides; and forth from her must flow the potency of missionary life. Boards are but methods, not entities. The churches are our Antioch; corporate members, Prudential Committee, missionaries, are their Paul and Barnabas. Upon us the churches lay directed hands, to whom also we return with report. We are the river bed, the channel, through which flows the crystal river of their beneficence. We are, to use Paul's striking figure, the earthern casket to carry their intrusted gospel treasures to the Gentile sons and daughters of God.

Christ keep us from becoming lords of the heritage; keep us flexible, open channels, willing and loyal servants of transportation! Perish all methods that suggest assumptions or aught faithless to the sentiment dear to every Congregational heart, "The American Board, the servant of the churches, for Jesus' sake!"

In such mood we reverently handle this word of his Spirit. It is a conclusion of our apostolic fathers — a conclusion most revolutionary in its effect upon their Christian minds. It is a conclusion accepted reverently, candidly, joyously. "They held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles *also* hath God granted repentance unto life." Hostile reluctance before it fled away like morning mist, and at a single stroke they saw with welcome that the privileges of the new kingdom, like the command of God, were "wide as the world."

This expansion of vision was the more possible because their previous reluctance was not of the will and heart, but of the head. Theirs was not the hesitation of

a narrow and ungenerous indifference, but of ignorance of the divine purpose. Hard-headedness is always more hopeful than hard-heartedness, but no man ever so Christian-hearted became a good neighbor until he had located his neighbor with the theodolite of the Good Samaritan.

Whether or not our Lord while on earth restricted the "kindness of God toward man" to the lost sheep of the house of Israel for the same reason that Moses loosened the marriage bond — "even the hardness of their hearts" — certainly he did so restrict, and to that extent the infant Church could not understand his speech when, at the moment of his coronation, he commissioned them to compass sea and land with his gospel. Both apostles and brethren thought they were doing God's service by discipling within the Jewish radius.

Cornelius of Cæsarea was the pioneer, the Columbus, to discover for the Gentile world the new continent of grace and truth; or, to vary the figure, Cornelius made the test case. Believing that a dying and risen Saviour gave the repenting and believing Gentile *also* a right to the tree of life and entrance through the gates of the city, he appealed to the supreme court for a ruling to that effect and won his suit. The middle wall of partition was thrown down, and to the consciousness of the infant Church — lo! the field was the world. Let us of Gentile ancestry cherish the name of Cornelius in everlasting remembrance!

Little did Peter know the use he was soon to make of the keys of the kingdom nor the resplendent ministry he put in peril on that cold morning of his profane denial in the high priest's court. It only remained for a stroke of lightning from the third heaven outside of Damascus, a little later on, to complete what the prayer of the dying Stephen began, and Paul, the immortal agent for this larger hope, was ready to commence the foreign missionary era of the Christian Church — a commencement whose radiance still enlightens the world.

Sad addition to sacred history is it to write that even *then* Jerusalem should so far remain under the old blight as again "not to know her day," and Antioch, rather than she, became the mother missionary church. Must this chapter of history, this chapter of reluctance in the life of the first church, like so many others, repeat itself? Does only the timid and despondent spirit see in disturbed vision a church alike reluctant before the *present* Gentile missionary problem, a disposition to lock the door against the non-Christian portion of our race? Dr. Dennis, in his lecture on the "Present Day Conflicts of the Foreign Mission Field," heads the list of "conflicts inevitable in aggressive efforts at reform" with "a self-centered Christianity in the Church at home."

Will not a concensus of American pastors reveal the existence of a formidable and growing minority in our churches avowing with hesitant and sullen speech, "We do not believe in foreign missions?" The pastor's prayerful appeal is met by a cold counter-congregational wave, and the church, like its Master, cannot do many mighty works "because of their unbelief." These pastors sadly wonder "whereunto this thing will grow."

Blessed be the Lord, these reluctant brethren — for whom He died — are in a minority to whom the majority cannot give place. No, not for an hour! But in the presence of the sublimest wish and loftiest command of Him whose wish and command are like Himself "the same yesterday, today, and forever," the majority cry out, not for victory only, but for unity. In the presence of incredible pagan necessity and misery Christ's followers must be of one mind and one heart. They must all hang together or all hang separately when the Son of man shall come in his glory. Nor may these pastors fondly hope that this upas tree of reluctance stretches its roots no farther than the mushroom village of Doctrinal Dispute. It exists in congregations where that wound is healed, and where over its scar has grown the flesh of a

little child. Congregations contain it which paid as little regard to our recent theological fisticuffing as the waves to the royal mandate of Canute.

Men and brethren, what shall we do? O, for a fresh message from the Lord! a tidal wave of revelation to sweep away this unbelief and cause the unified brotherhood of the Church to hold their peace and glorify God before the flaming conviction of our fathers, "To the Gentiles *also* hath God granted repentance unto life!"

Perhaps we do not need a new revelation. What holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost may *yet* be "profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness" and able thoroughly to furnish today's men of God for missions. Was not the very Scripture before us written for *our* example upon whom the end of this missionary age has come? and, restated in faith, may it not repeat the first miracle of conviction? In the hope of this consummation, so devoutly to be wished, let us open the casket and take out its apple of gold.

First, it contains a declaration of their own precious faith, "God hath granted repentance unto life." To the Gentiles also, no less, no more, than to their own grateful and joyous selves, hath God granted repentance unto life.

"Hath God granted." O, not merely humanitarian in origin was this new gospel movement across the face of time and which had caught them in its radiant train! Our apostolic fathers were too near the divinity that originated their Christianity to imagine its divorcement from God, its author. The recipients of this revelation were the men whose eyes had seen and whose hands had touched the Word of life. What they had worth living for, dying for, and hoping for for their children was a fresh grant from God. Every statement of it began with the Divine name. "God so loved the world." Their redemption called for a narrative in terms no less august than their creation. They felt themselves to be the honored

creatures of a divine undertaking; they were workers together with God. "He, the High and Holy One," had come among them bearing in his white hands an affluent extension of privilege, a heavenly grant, far in advance of what had glorified their creation. Made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor, they were now the redeemed sons and daughters of God.

Their traditions contained Alexander's conquests, the splendor and irresistible awfulness of which filled the world and bore all before and under—a miracle of time. The majestic, iron Roman movement then held them in its world-wide grip. These men, eyewitnesses of colossal human things, were now sharers in an undertaking of God—the God of Alexander and Cæsar as well as of Abraham, Moses, and David. They were the grateful and adoring beneficiaries of a divine grant. Like Jacob they awoke to find God in that place, with designs of unfathomable grace upon them. This new bush also was aflame with God.

Nor were the *contents* of the grant out of keeping with its adorable Author. "Repentance unto life." The first word recalls that pathetic bit of biography about Esau. He sold his birthright for a profanely paltry price and could find no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. Under this lifted curtain we see the elder brother repenting at leisure. He walks blinded by scalding tears all about the unhappy transaction of that fatal day, seeking a loophole in the compact through which to recall his fool's play; but he found no place of repentance. But these fathers were born on a kindlier day—a day of the Son of God, wherein the Esaus, traders in infinitely worthier birthrights, were granted repentance, privilege to recall bad bargains, and to resume their forfeited heirship of their Father.

"Repentance unto *life*." The last word carried them to the "beginning," to the most coveted tree in the garden, outside of whose closed and guarded gates the race

wandered, Esau-like, in tears. *Now* the race is greeted with the glorious gospel of the blessed God. The only begotten Son hath secured their right to enter in through the gates into the garden — the garden now grown to be a populous city in virtue of the mighty multitude of repentant and believing Esaus admitted, whose tears are all wiped away — and to the tree of life, of which if a man eat he shall live forever in the paradise of God.

But these early Christian fathers belonged to the class who with hope of Christ *only in this life* were of all men most miserable. In this life only, after visions of the unseen and eternal? They could no more be satisfied with the best of the seen and temporal; as well ask Columbus to be contented with the Mediterranean, with its shore range always in sight, after sailing the broad Atlantic in company only with the sun and stars.

This was the kingdom of Israel revised by Jesus Christ — the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading in the heavens — a living hope of which the resurrection of our Lord had begotten in their own precious faith. And now the scales have fallen from their eyes; the mists have rolled away; and lo! every Gentile — alien and stranger to the commonwealth of Israel — is by God's grant a possible fellow citizen and member of the household of God, joint heir to a like precious faith. From that day forward these fathers were wide-eyed men. The kingdom was as a cloudless June night sky viewed through a telescope. They know now why their blind hearts burned within them as their Lord talked to them on Olivet about preaching the gospel in all the world.

You *reluctant brethren* of the modern Church of Christ, who daily bless the God and Father for your living hope, come upon this mount of divine vision! Behold the transfiguring glory of your estate in Christ Jesus — this inexpressible grant. Let the burning light of the conviction that smote the fathers to the earth fall upon you. Make your admission in like silence and glorifica-

tion. "Then hath God granted" to the American pagan, the live Indian, the narcotized Chinaman, the licentious Japanese, the "unspeakable Turk," the insufferable Brahman, the creeping Pariah, the man-eating Islander, the fetich-groveling African — to man, thy flesh and blood brother, anywhere, everywhere, steeped and foul in the incredible darkness of a Christless night — hath God granted repentance unto life, granted the unspeakable privilege with yourselves of entering into the kingdom of his dear Son. Compel your narrow lips to say it once, and be redeemed from your unneighborly unbelief.

"God hath granted" it. He doth not plead with his *Church* to grant it. Far up and back in heaven, among the ineffable eternities, before the mountains were brought forth or ever He had formed the earth and the world, when we all lay unformed in the loins of the formless void, the council was held, the foreordination took place. Infinite love fashioned the solitary decree. It rested in divine patience and confidence for its justification upon Calvary. There on the mount, outside the city's gates, it received its everlasting vindication.

If God hath made the grant, what then? Given the heavenly vision, what is the task?

On the housetop at Joppa, Peter has his dream. Divine Wisdom selects his method of revelation and succeeds. The four-footed beasts and the fowls were a parable understood by the dreamer. When Peter was before Cornelius and his company in Cæsarea he said, "Unto me hath God showed that I should not call *any man* common or unclean." We read that while he pondered on the vision "behold, the men of Cornelius stood before the gate." The vision and the men were in conjunction. Peter must go with the men. No enterprise was ever more carefully conducted by its head. Before Cornelius, St. Peter sees but one duty — "to preach Christ." He performs his duty, and soon the infallible sign of divine adoption is made. The Spirit falls

on the Gentile company as on the fathers in the beginning. It were withstanding God to withhold baptism. Given the *vision* of the *divine right* of the Gentiles to the privileges of the kingdom, the *task* of *disciple-making* among them followed as the day follows the night.

Who shall abrogate this relationship of visions and tasks? Because we are the Church of Christ we may not draw the easy inference that the door of his kingdom is merely to be left hospitably open, or to write over it "Welcome;" or, as a sufficient measure of hospitality, to send into Gentile winter St. Bernard dogs, with food and drink tied about their necks. It is no mark of heavenly grace that we abstain from playing the flaming angel before the gate. By confession we are followers of him who from a child was about his "Father's business." We are sheep to be housed from the wolves, but more than sheep. We are like the kissed and fêted younger son, who found enforced at home the abiding law of the homestead — the law that during all the years of his prodigality required service of the elder brother without so much as the bonus of a kid.

The incarnation was not an exceptional event, in kind to remain *sui generis* throughout the Christian centuries, but one to be in measure reproduced in every follower. We are not even diminutive Christs. Let that spirit be in us that does not look upon equality with Christ a prize to be striven for. "God hath highly exalted" us and given us the name *disciple*, above every other name but His; reproduced for the same sacred purpose, namely, to do the Father's will and work on earth. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work," is the motto of every true son of God. Imagine an idle Lord before you justify an idle disciple. It ought to be the Christian's meat, as it was Christ's, to do the will of Him that sent him and finish his work. We are workers together with God. Our works are they that will follow us, and from our

labors we are to rest. Science seems to confirm this doctrine of Christian responsibility.

"Whenever the scheme was planned it must have been foreseen that the time would come when the directing part of the course of evolution would pass into the hands of man. A spectator of the drama for ages, too ignorant to see that it was a drama and too impotent to do more than play his little part, the discovery must sooner or later break upon him that Nature meant him to become a partner in her task and share the responsibility of the closing acts. It is not given him as yet to bind the sweet influences of Pleiades or to unloose the bands of Orion. In part only can he make the winds or waves obey him or control the falling rain, but in larger part he holds the dominion of the world of lower life. He exterminates what he pleases; he creates and he destroys; he changes; he evolves; his selection replaces natural selection; he replenishes the earth with plants and animals according to his will. But in far grander sphere and in infinitely profounder sense has the sovereignty passed to him, for by the same decree he finds himself the guardian and the arbiter of his personal destiny and that of his fellow men. The molding of his life and of his children's children in measure lies with him. Through institutions of his creation, through parliaments, churches, societies, schools, he shapes the path of progress for his country and his time. The evils of the world are combated by his remedies; its passions are stayed, its wrongs redressed, its energies for good or evil directed by his hand. For unnumbered millions he opens or shuts the gates of happiness and paves the way for misery or social health. Never before was it known and felt with the same solemn certainty that man, within bounds which none can pass, must be his own maker and the maker of the world. For the first time in history not individuals only, but multitudes of the wisest and noblest in every land, take home to themselves and un-

ceasingly concern themselves with the problem of the evolution of mankind. Multitudes more — philanthropists, statesmen, missionaries, humble men and patient women — devote themselves daily to its practical solution, and everywhere *some*, in a Godlike culmination of altruism, give their very lives for their fellow men."

Here is an illustration of Christian responsibility. Said A. M. Mackay, that noble missionary, in his diary while in Berlin in May, 1874, "This day last year Livingstone died — a Scotchman and a Christian, loving God and his neighbor, in the heart of Africa. 'Go thou and do likewise.'" And in December of the next year, in a letter to the Church Missionary Society, "My heart burns for the deliverance of Africa, and if you can send me to any of those regions which Livingstone and Stanley have found groaning under the curse of the slave-hunter I shall be very glad."

Pardon this abiding in the alphabet of our Christian convictions, but the white light is pouring down upon the foundations. Nothing is allowed to be merely because it has long been, or been enshrined in the reverence of man. The Church is not merely a city set on a hill, but is herself bathed in the blaze of a flaming scrutiny. Herself and her methods are under the glare of the search light. Never has the world been so exacting of the Church! never such large things awaited her doing! Never before has the Church so needed to return to her *original* and study her *primary lessons!* Let us ourselves be most critical.

The colossal task of the Redeemer grows clearer. His is not a flight through the ages drawing the fleeing households into his train, impelled thither by rumors of fast-following evil. An aggressive campaign is the Lord's. He never sounds the retreat. He is the prophet-king who contemplates his enemies under his feet. His Church shall yet see, not a vast solitude of peace — a graveyard, within the trenches of which lie buried the armies of hell

—but the city of God, the New Jerusalem, come down out of heaven; the tabernacle of God among men; all the splendid conditions of heaven fulfilled on earth; a race, individual and social, animated by eternal life—a celestial civilization. The Redeemer must reign until he has done this. His headquarters are for the time in the sky; the earth is the scene of the enterprise. His Church is his agent, so far as we know. At Pentecost the Spirit sat only on the infant Church. It was to do greater works than its founder. We know of no crop of heavenly things growing in any field other than that plowed, sowed, and watered by Christian husbandmen.

When Peter flinched, the Lord had no substitute. "On the eve of his martyrdom, as it is said, the friends of the apostle obtained the means for his escape. They pleaded the desolation of the Church. He may have remembered his deliverance by the angel from Herod's prison. And so he yielded to their prayers. The city was now left and he was hastening along the Appian way, when the Lord met him. 'Lord, whither goest thou?' was his one eager question; and the reply followed, 'I go to Rome to be crucified again for thee.'

"Next morning the prisoner was found by the keepers in his cell; and St. Peter gained the fulfillment of the Lord's words and followed Him even to the cross.

"The tradition may be only a thought clothed in an outward dress, but it gathers up with singular power and beauty the sum of what has been said. If that Divine Figure rises up before us in the crisis of our trial, service will be transfigured by the glory of Him who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. So looking to Christ, we shall come to understand little by little the meaning of His command, sufficient alone to move, to guide, to support, 'Follow me!'"

The Christian waits to know what God has for him to do; the Christian does what God has for him to do. Like Luther he can do no other, God help him! It is not safe for him to violate his conscience.

We are confused by the clash of many methods, the calls of many pressing righteousnesses. Having set our faces toward social Christianity, the manifold relations of men pressing for reconstruction stagger our faith in Christ's old way of converting men for the sake of converting society—the way after which we have fashioned our missionary enterprises. Yet, before the Lord, we are making all things after "the pattern shown on the mount;" and we trust by this primitive gospel outfit to see paganism go under the King's feet, with all its moral and social miseries, through the personal conversion of its children and by supplying her converted children with the affluences of a Christian civilization. Nor may we forget in the meantime to eradicate the long-lingering heathenisms tolerated in that so-called Christian civilization. If the time for great social reconstruction at home has come, please God we can accomplish both, Christ strengthening us. The men of God are thoroughly furnished unto *every* good work. We must obey God rather than men.

So we take our place on the frontiers of today's Gentiles, in line with the whole dear brotherhood of Christ's Church, shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace and the sword of the Spirit in hand. Let us go forward singing the Battle Hymn,

"He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free."

We dare hold no other relation to our heavenly vision without being disobedient. "God hath granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life." After the man from Macedonia had preferred his midnight plea St. Luke writes, "And when he had seen the vision straightway we sought to go forth, concluding that God hath called us to preach the gospel unto them." Is not this the conclusion of the whole matter? What special indebtedness had Paul to Greek and barbarian that *we* have not? Let *us* straightway seek to go, also; but, going, depend

not on mere humanitarian impulses, on the gaping wounds of the half-dead foreign neighbor, not even on our confidence in Christ's missionary methods.

We read that the Lord at the end of the supper said, "That the world may know that I love the Father . . . Arise, let us be going." In the supreme moment, not his love for men, but for the Father, was his innermost resource. Even so this "grant of God" to the Gentile must be *our* supreme missionary motive. Our brother man has a divine right to the tree of life, to enter in through the gates of the city. The most unclean heathen hidden in the black heart of Uganda is like the Waldensian girl of blood-stained tradition. On her way to the hidden chapel the dragoon challenges, "Whither away, my lass?" She answers: "I am going to my Father's house. His Son is dead. The will is to be read today and I am in it." And, brethren beloved, we must let him know that he is in it. We must persuade him, even as our fathers persuaded us, to accept his patrimony.

THE GOSPEL FOR HUMANITY

ANNUAL SERMON

BEFORE THE

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THE GOSPEL FOR HUMANITY.

"FOR I DETERMINED NOT TO KNOW ANYTHING AMONG YOU SAVE JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED."— *1 Corinthians ii: 2.*

PASSING a church the other day with a clock in the tower having three faces, I observed the not uncommon fact that these faces were sadly at variance one with another. Upon one dial the hands were motionless; upon another they were moving, but they were several hours behind. There was, however, one dial that told the truth, that reported the exact progress of the day, that kept its vision upon the great sun, ordered its steps according to his goings, and held the busy and trustful community to the unerring movement of the skies. It would make all the difference in the world which dial should be consulted by the toiler below. The dial without motion would bring no help to the puzzled man, and that whose symbols were wrong would lead him astray. His right relation to his task would depend upon his finding the dial that answered to the sun.

Now this is exactly the case with the great foreign missionary work of the Christian Church. Everything depends upon the region of life to which one looks for guidance. There is a side of life absolutely stationary, wholly destitute of spiritual vision and impulse, utterly materialistic, having the form of humanity without the power, completely disconnected from the universal and divine meaning of man's career. If we shall consult that, and only that, there will swiftly come disaster to one's enthusiasm and death to one's faith. There is a side of life in the movement of the Spirit, but so far behind that whoever consults it alone will have

for the working forces of today the ideals, the anticipations, the outlooks, the beliefs, and the superstitions of an outgrown age. Nowhere will he be up to date. In his case the dial and the sun are in hopeless discord. And this discordance will affect not only belief, but also the entire practical attitude toward foreign missions. The forms of faith, the interpretations of the divine message, the presentations of the truth, will be sadly antiquated; and the contributions will be behind, the missionary ideals decades in arrears, the moral judgment entirely misled and out of keeping with the sublime fact, and the whole magnificent enterprise will languish because of the intellectual and spiritual confusion of those who are carrying it forward. But there is a side of life that looks heavenward, and that orders thought and conduct with supreme reference to that; there is a region of our Christendom that waits upon the Lord, and that reports His ongoings; there is a dial upon the heart of the disciple of Jesus that watches the Son of God, that repeats by silent indicators and in tones that beat into the souls of men the progress of the eternal purpose, and as face answers to face in water, so does this dial upon the devout and strenuous spirit answer to the movement of the Infinite Christ.

The greatness of Paul as a guide and inspiration in foreign missions has its ground here. He is ever watching, ever following, and ever reporting the truth of the Eternal Christ. The apostle was in Corinth as a foreign missionary. He had evidently made the deepest and wisest preparation for his great work. He did not care to preach what was already current among the people. Least of all was it his wish to carry matters doubtful to the Corinthians, nor had he any desire to burden them with a theological system, or drown them in an ocean of unimportant detail. His intention was to carry to Corinth, if he could, something that the people needed and yet did not have — a creed so simple that it could be embraced by every sincere soul, and so mighty that it could not be embraced without working an entire revolution in the character.

Paul took the loftiest view of the attainments of the Greek peoples. They had poetry and art and philosophy and history and oratory of surpassing excellence. He would not try to add to their possessions along these lines. They had systems of ethics of the most elaborate character, sincerely seeking the highest moral truth, and in many cases successfully finding it. His business was not that of a new ethical teacher, although he certainly had original ideas in that department of life. Paul thus swept within the compass of his vision the rich results of Greek and Roman civilizations; he saw what these people had attained, and he concluded that it was not worth his while to carry to them, even in a nobler form, teaching that they already possessed. He might have done this if he had found himself unable to do better. But his whole heart was moved with delight and thankfulness to think that he could carry to the nations something absolutely new. The pure idea of self-sacrifice embodied with transcendent fidelity in the career of Jesus Christ—that message would be something wholly new, and it would be the power of God unto salvation.

Paul's message, then, was the eternal sacrifice in the heart of God mediated by the personal sacrifice of Christ. His doctrine was of God as eternal personal love, and Christ and His cross was the utterance both of the personality of God and His infinite regard for men. And this is the gospel that the Church sends, by her missionary apostles in the successive generations of history, to the nations. It is this message that explains the past of the American Board, that accounts for the power it has wielded, that is the reason for another annual meeting of its friends, that is the source of its sublime ideals, its moral energies, and its confident hopes, and that is the divine justification of its existence to itself and to mankind.

The Christian faith leads up to the personality of God as its final and supreme truth. Man walks in a vain show

when he stops short of the ultimate divine reality by which his life is encompassed. The visible, audible, and tangible worlds are but symbols of the real; the awful truth lies in the invisible, the inaudible, the intangible, in the realm that is supersensuous and eternal. Our outward world is but a soap-bubble, so thin is it and so uncertain, and its movement and beauty are of the will and splendor that are unseen, and its collapse leaves man face to face with the Personal Spirit behind the pageant that we call nature. Berkeley is right; our sensuous experience is nothing if it be not the speech of the Infinite Spirit to the finite, the continuous communion of the Eternal with those made in His image. And so of history. It is the second, the surer, the more awful path to the Divine Presence. Underneath the conscious life of the individual and society, below all the noble movements of the race, the creative source of its genius and sainthood, its arts and institutions, its Bibles and its faiths, is the Eternal Spirit. The great ultimate reality is the living God. The universe is centered in His infinite person. And the significance, for missions and for men, of the Lord Jesus lies in the fact that His character offers itself as the sovereign instrument of the Eternal; His divine personality becomes the one great world-mediator of the Personality that is ultimate and transcendent. There is one God, and one world-mediator between God and man; there is an ultimate and eternal Person in whom the universe is centered, and there is in history a divine man, the Son of God, who is the authentic revelation, and the veritable introduction to the life of mankind, of His Father's purpose and love and power.

This is the thought that lies behind the inspiring message of Paul. The living God, whose nature is eternal sacrifice, has found a perfect mediator in the Christ. The unseen and infinite Personality has thus found a transcendent instrument through which He can operate upon the hearts of mankind in the gracious and majestic personality of Jesus. This idea of the living and loving God, uttered in

time and brought to bear upon the human soul, is the essential thing in Christianity. It is, in its richness and scope of meaning and in the entire character of its significance, absolutely new. Its idea of God is new; its conception of sacrifice as conserving the individual while it spends him for the race is new; and its embodiment of this idea in a person of reproachless fidelity to it is without any approach to a parallel in the events of certain history. It is this doctrine of the living, loving God, mediated and brought to bear upon the souls of men by the living, loving Christ, that we are to send to all lands until the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ.

We prize our ideas of the gospel, but we must never make the mistake of supposing that our ideas are the gospel. The gospel is the living, loving God, moving with ineffable power in the living, loving Christ, and our thoughts are but poor images of this transcendent reality. Between the picture of the bird and the bird itself on the wing there is an infinite distance. The picture may be great. It may give us the skylark in mid-heaven, with the fires of morning reddening its wings, or it may show us the eagle high over some solitary Alpine height, and the representation may be full of beauty and power. Nothing but thanks should be felt for such a work of art; it renders an essential and noble service. Nevertheless, how incomparable it is to the reality! Its skylark is motionless and songless; its eagle is shorn of the grace and majesty of life. When we ask for life from art we ask too much. The picture cannot give song, it cannot give flight; no more can thought give the final and sovereign touch of God. It cannot ring with the harmonies, nor can it sweep in the forms and rhythms of the ultimate, personal Reality. Conceptions of truth may be great; systems of opinion may be the supreme work of art, the best and highest utterance of the structural power of the mind. They are the mark of rationality, and are inseparable from the whole procedure of man's intellectual life. But they are not the supreme and ultimate manifestation of God. Only

life can yield life; only personality can reveal personality; only the perfect personal Christ can utter to mankind the being of the perfect personal God.

Here, then, is our gospel for the nations — the Eternal Personal Love uttered in terms of its own nature by Jesus Christ, and by Him wielded upon the thoughts, emotions, and purposes of men. Our salvation comes from God, and Christ is the Master of the world because He is God's supreme representative. We must never forget that Christianity is first of all a doctrine of God, and then of God mediated by the Son of God. And if we wish to see Christian civilization carried over the earth we must go to the root of the matter. We must trace the truth and grace of that civilization to its source; we must explain the confidence of reason, the moral idealism, the incomparable character, the varied, astonishing achievement in every line of lofty interest, and the quenchless optimism that have been the great notes of Christendom by reference to their origin in the overshadowing and ineffable thought of God. Here is the secret of it all — our God is our glory. And a similar and greater glory will come to the nations if they will but embrace that regenerating thought. The sublimest attainment of mankind is the Christian conception of God. No tongue can tell the power and the peace that pass incessantly through our entire civilization from this high consciousness of the living God to which we have been lifted. Life itself becomes a new thing. Its errand becomes august — from the Infinite to the Infinite; its task, however lowly, becomes grand — the surrender of the soul in the sum of its interests and activities to the conserving grace of the Eternal; its trouble, however great, cannot remain inexplicable, but is changed into the stormy discipline by which the spirit is purified and prepared to look upon God and live; its fellowship, however broken by death and clouded by loneliness, carries in its heart the prophecy of the endless years. For all the world the new thing and the true thing, and the thing forever needed, is the Christian idea of God uttered

through the whole sacrificial career of the Lord Jesus. This was the message that Paul as a foreign missionary carried to Corinth; this is the incomparable gospel that we are sending to the nations today.

1. This gospel of the living, loving God uttered by the living, loving Christ contains a principle of exclusion. "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." We are not under obligation to export our entire body of belief. There is no particular call for our church polity, our special theology, or the traditions of our Christian life. These are not wanted; if sent, they would prove unsuitable. Paul's example here is of the greatest moment. He had his faith as a Jew transformed into his faith as a Christian, and he had a hundred convictions and opinions and beliefs that formed the psychological setting to his sense of the sovereign love of God in Christ for the world. He allowed all else to go, good as it was in its own place, essential as it was to the total content of his mind, and reported only the transcendent truth of the living, personal Father revealed through the living Christ. The apostle allowed the Corinthians to manage their churches in their own way; to think widely and freely, if so be that they did not contradict the fundamental facts of the gospel; and he passed no sentence of condemnation upon the wisdom of the world, save as he felt compelled to exhibit its tremendous limitations. Here is the mood for the modern Church. She is to send her God and her Saviour and her new life in the Spirit, and she is to leave theological and ecclesiastical forms to the Christian sense of these nations. Varying types of thought differentiate all great peoples. The intellectual traits of the German, the Frenchman, the Englishman, and the American are different. Their philosophies and theologies are different. We look for unity at the present stage of development only in the regions of faith and hope and love, only in the grand objects of our religious devotion and service. Here is the great commission of the foreign missionary today. He is to preach the Eternal Personal

Love as attested by the whole career of Christ. This is the test, and the only test, of the spiritual fitness of the man who offers himself as a representative of the church upon the foreign field. Has he a message? Is it that the heart of the universe is Personal Sacrifice, and that revealed and verified by the personal sacrifice of the Lord? Does he carry his message of Jesus Christ and Him crucified in a mind sufficiently enlightened, in a heart adequately deep and tender, in a life profoundly moved by the Spirit of God? If so, he, and he alone, is the foreign missionary of the apostolic type.

The principle of exclusion here illustrated is of the first importance in our great foreign missionary enterprise at the present time. We are in the midst of changes in many of the forms of Christian faith. This vast work of ours rests upon the devotion of the rising generation of Christian students and laymen. Both students and laymen are under a training widely different from that which has hitherto prevailed. The time has come for considering the relation of our great work to the forces available for carrying it forward. The strong hands and the wise foresight and the powerful influence of the older generation cannot always last. Where are the fathers? Do they live forever? We must turn to the Christian youth of the land in a magnificent confidence, and put the burden of expanding this work upon their intelligence and love. And I am confident that we shall not turn in vain. We shall find those among them who are characterized by power, those who are representative of the new time upon which we are entering, at variance with the fathers upon many of the details and upon some of the fundamentals of theology. We cannot expect it to be otherwise. It must never be forgotten, therefore, that the foreign missionary has but one imperative. He is bound to preach one thing only, the righteous love of God as that stands revealed in the historic Christ. If he is great at this central point, he should be allowed unimpeded freedom of exclusion.

We must go further; we must put the missionary under bonds to use this principle of exclusion against all that is mere tradition in our churches, and against all that is mere innovation. The question of fitness for this service is answered only when the missionary is found under the sovereignty of the Christian conception of God, when it is seen that his whole nature is roused and ruled by the eternal sacrifice declared through the Son of God. Only the vision of God in Christ and the love in which that vision completes itself can raise up a new generation of men and women devoted to foreign missions. In order that we may enlist in this service our best students, the young men of genius and prophetic power, and in order that the great-hearted among all who gather in the house of God from Sunday to Sunday may feel that they have part in this world enterprise, we must insist upon the apostolic principle of exclusion. We recall how Gideon's army was cut down in numbers that it might become a conquering power. At first the people were too many for victory; then twenty-two thousand returned to their homes of those who were fearful and trembling. Again the voice came, "The people are yet too many." The host was reduced to three hundred mighty men of valor, and with these the conflict became for Gideon an overwhelming victory. The same thing holds true in the realm of the spirit. Paul threw away everything but the essential and supreme truth of Christianity. He knew that with the pure idea of sacrifice embodied in Jesus Christ with divine fullness and grace he could conquer the heart of the world. He was eager as Gideon to send back to the school of the rabbi all the traditions which as a Jew he had learned. He was impatient to retire everything that was in any degree unessential. He wanted it to be clear as noonday what it was that won the love and devotion of those to whom he spoke. He wanted no division of honors between the gospel and something else. He reduced his creed to invincibility, and the first incentive from Paul's great determination is the call upon us to go and do likewise.

2. We have in Paul's gospel to the nations a principle of assimilation. We know that this has been one of the great features of Christianity from the beginning. It first of all absorbed the essential and permanent elements in Hebraism, and then showed that it had besides a distinctive and incomparable life of its own. The Sermon on the Mount takes up into itself the decalogue and at the same time transcends it infinitely. Heaven and earth may pass away, but not a grain of truth stored in the ancient Hebrew world falls to the ground. The whole higher thought of lawgiver and king, prophet and psalmist, is taken up into the mind of Jesus and changed into something universal and final. The same principle is illustrated in the career of Paul. He was born a Jew, and in some respects he remained a Jew to the last; and yet his Judaism was brought to the judgment seat of his Christianity. Whatever in his early belief was of enduring worth as thus judged passed into his new faith; whatever was incapable of being assimilated was allowed to fall away and die. This apostle stood for the uniqueness of Christianity, and also for its power to assimilate the truth found by the preceding ages. He applied his principle in all directions. He found the Greek thought serviceable in his new career, and he made it the servant of his gospel. We all know how this process went on — how Greek philosophy was laid under contribution in working out the Christian conception of God, and how the environment, rich in Roman custom, rite, and institution, was turned to the service of the Church. Christianity attests its divinity by its power to take up into itself all the truth which it meets and by giving to that truth a share in its own life.

This great feature of the gospel has a twofold bearing upon our missionary work. In the first place, the absolute incomparableness of Christianity should leave us free to put a high estimate upon the moral and spiritual achievements of the leading extra-Christian nations. We can afford to do this; we are inflicting injury upon our own incomparable

faith when we fail in comprehensive generosity. Whatever of excellence there may be in the feeling of the Japanese, in the morality of the Chinese, or in the thought of the Hindu, Christians can afford to estimate in the most generous ways. There can be no possible competition between the idea of the cross and anything that these natives have to offer. Take the Hindu race. They are spoken of by those who best know them as intellectually one of the most gifted peoples on the globe. I cannot help the feeling that this is a very great exaggeration. The Hindus have no science, and do not even know what the word means. They have achieved no fame in working out a theory of government, and less in the institution of one. Their gift lies in the direction of metaphysics, and this subject they have conceived not as Plato or Aristotle did, nor as Kant and his great successors have done. Their strength has never been in orderly and valid thinking, even when turned upon the great centers of being. But they have a marvelous faculty and fertility of spiritual imagination, and their power of reflecting profound metaphysical truth through the luminous haze of intellectual vision is indeed amazing. Nevertheless, one feels that even here there is a certain cheapness about the product. It is as if there were an illimitable fog bank off our shores, rolling in under a blazing summer sun. It comes in transfigured masses; it is a wonder of beauty, but after all it is thin and cheap and unwholesome. One can hardly resist a feeling like this in witnessing the exercises of the Hindu mind. It is talk by the mile and the league, and, although pleasant to hear, it lacks the note of reality. It somehow fails of representative worth in respect to the character of the speaker, in respect to the experience of the average sincere man, and, above all, in respect to the order and grandeur of the universe. But whether this is a just criticism or not, one thing is sure, that the Hindu idea of sacrifice and the Christian are wholly unlike. The idea of a sacrifice which, while it wastes individual life for the world, conserves it as an essential part of redeemed society, is for-

eign to Hindu civilization. When that idea is embodied in Jesus Christ, and taken as a revelation of the heart of the universe, we have a supreme gift to make to all nations. The Christian idea of God, the Christian Saviour, the Christian conception of a redeemed society, they do not possess; and they are old, worn out with immeasureable volitional imbecilities, exhausted by an immemorial divorce of the intellect and the will, and corrupted by illimitable clouds of spurious sentiment. They need Christ and His cross as the revelation of the essential nature of God and man.

Still, the other side must not be overlooked. God has not left any of these peoples without witness of Himself, and therefore the work of assimilation must go on. It is in the power of the gospel to enter sympathetically the past of Japan and China and the wonderful reach and richness of Hindu history, and put upon the whole expanse the light of its own divine interpretation. It can, in a way, identify itself with the great traditions of all these peoples; make them live their long histories over again and read their deeper meanings into itself. It can, without in the least endangering its unique character, appear in the light of those empires, and come in the colors which are dear to them; it can put on as dress many of the intellectual habits that are inseparable from their constitution. Until the Jew saw his Judaism transfigured in Christianity he could not abandon the old faith for the new; until the Greek beheld the vision of Plato under grander forms in the vision of Christ he could not forsake the academy for the Church; until the Roman discovered in the sign of the cross a diviner form of the victorious power after which he had thirsted he could not change his allegiance; and until China shall see Confucius idealized and transcended in our Master, and Japan her beggarly elements glorified in the Christian inheritance, and India her sublime names taken out of the region of imagination and in our Lord made the equivalent of the moral order of the universe, we cannot expect them to become His disciples.

It seems to me that our dreams of dominion for our Master must be more and more along this line. He must prove Himself a better ruler to Japan, a nobler Confucius to China, a diviner Gautama to India; the whole sacred past must reappear in Him transfigured and carried utterly beyond itself. He must come, but He must come upon the clouds of heaven, in their morning beauty and in their evening splendor. He must come, but He must come as the consummation of the ideals of every nation under heaven, and as the inapproachable reproduction of their deepest historic life. Dante clung to the vision of the Florentine maiden, whom he met when only a boy of nine, and whose image he found to be unforgettable. He carried in his heart of hearts the sacred picture even after Beatrice had become another's, after it was clear that in this world she never could be his. He was in bondage to the early form until in maturer life and in mystic experience he beheld her in paradise. The new form made him forget the old; the later vision replaced the earlier, the soul in heaven the sensuous life in Florence. But the deep-hearted poet, the passionate and permanent lover, was able to let go the earthly for the heavenly, the human for the divine, because he beheld all that he had loved, the veritable Florentine maiden, the Beatrice of his wondering boyhood, taken up into this new splendor of God. The past could be abandoned because it lived again before him in transcendent form. And this must be the experience of the nations if they are to come into the kingdom of our Lord. They have not been left wholly desolate. They have seen unforgettable faces. They have moved in the power of a venerative love for thousands of generations. From that past, that imperfect, they cannot be torn until under the spell of the missionary's words they behold again what they have revered, and see it in the awful beauty of Jesus Christ. The Christ for the world is the Christ in whom the infinite sanctity of life and all its deepest and divinest dreams reappear, and such a Christ it is our incomparable joy to send to the ends of the earth.

3. It must further be noticed that this gospel to the nations contains within itself a principle of development. Christian history is a revelation of Christ additional to that contained in the New Testament. It is all from the Divine Life recorded there; but it is a new and more extended and in some respects a mightier exhibition of His character. The Holy Spirit is the supreme gift of Christianity; He is the guide into all truth, the helper of the head and the heart alike, the victorious rational impulse in the attempt to understand the mind of God in nature and in history, the invincible ethical inspiration in the endeavor to conform life to the eternal standard presented in Christ. Christian history is an evolution of the Holy Spirit through the rational and moral consciousness of Christ's disciples, and the evolution must go on until the divine shall prevail in the intelligence and heart of the race. Because there is a Holy Spirit in Christianity there has been spiritual progress and theological development; because our faith rests upon the eternal deeps of the divine wisdom and love, there must be advance in the temper of the soul and in the achievements of the intelligence, on to the end of time. What we are to look out for is that the development shall be real; that it shall be a revelation of its original source; that the historic effect shall conform to and not contradict the transcendent cause; that the movement of the Church shall be a continuous and cumulative exhibition of its founder and Lord.

The great historic theologies are not the New Testament; nor have they an equal authority with it; nor are they true in all their parts. Far from it. Yet are they an expression of the Eternal Spirit laboring with the intelligence of the Church at a completer apprehension of the Lord and His mission to mankind. They are true in their main lines of movement, true in their great affirmatives. The great ideas of Origen and Athanasius and Augustine, Luther and Calvin and Edwards, are valid thoughts for the world. Their systems are in ruins, but the ideal material out of which their systems were made, for the most part re-

mains imperishable. The imperishable in theology is vaster than most people imagine, and that great residuum from the suffering of the centuries is the product of the Holy Spirit.

Now this principle of development is indispensable in any right conception of foreign missions. All that we can hope to carry to the nations is the eternal spirit through the historic Christ. To fill the mind and heart and will with the Divine Life, that must be our supreme aim. All attempts to export systems of theology must fail. They will be tolerated by no people having in them a spark of original genius. Contrasted previous civilizations and the total diverse character of inheritance and environment will forever make impossible the domination of one division of the race by the rigidly formulated mind of another. The moment that a nation, like an individual, attains its majority, intellectual variation, constructive genius, begins to appear. The mind of the boy and youth is the proper subject of domination, and so barbarian Europe is happiest while in bondage to Plato and Aristotle. Manhood means freedom, and freedom means the power of selection and self-movement; and the nations that are good for anything, and to whom Providence has assigned any considerable task in the advance and enrichment of the kingdom of God, come at length to their majority. Then they simply must go their own way; to arrest them or to force them into another way would issue in a measureless sacrifice of power.

The nations are to be left to the control of the Holy Spirit as He enters the life through the presentation of the historic Christ. As from a few living forms the wondrous worlds that science beholds have been evolved, so from the spirit of the living God in a people's heart the development of their Christian faith will come. We are to see to it that the nations have the Lord and giver of life, and then we must trust them to His care. How have the great oak forests grown up all over the world? The acorns have grown upon the few primitive trees, and the winds have shaken them from the boughs and have carried them far

and wide and planted them in the living soil. Unconscious ministers of God these winds have been; in a living universe they had but to blow, to bear abroad, to transport life, and behold from their stormy labors forest upon forest appeared. With similar unconcern for consequences, in a depth of trust that looks like that unconsciousness, the foreign missionary is to take and spread the living word of the Lord, to carry from this tree of life the germs of life. In a living humanity filled with the Holy Spirit there need be no concern for the types of thought and ecclesiasticism that shall at length appear. Given the living nations filled with the living God in Christ, and the final growths will be for the good of mankind and the glory of the Lord.

The problem of foreign missions is the reduction of the world under the empire of Christ. We believe that His mind is simply incomparable, and that we are in duty bound to strive to put the whole race under His supremacy. The world that we seek to bring to the Lord is a growing world, and the question will come whether any one historic name can cover humanity's need. This planet of ours had its origin in the sun; it was flung out of the flaming center a mass of liquid fire, and we can think of it as a problem to itself as it went onward, acquiring distinct structure and growing into all the richness and splendor of these later ages. We can think of it asking if the old formula of dependence upon the sun was sufficient for it in its greater estate. And we can hear the answer, that it needs nothing other to account for the highest reaches of its physical history than the simple and everlasting power of the sun. The mighty expansion of our human world starts a similar question. The nations are so various, the great divisions of humanity are so unlike in their history and civilization, in their habits of thought, their ideals, their conceptions of the goodness of life; the mightier peoples are so rich in sacred tradition, in commanding names, and in deep-rooted and wide-spreading religions; the lower orders of society need something so divine to give them moral

hope; and the privileged classes have lived through an experience so varied, wearisome, and barren, and have settled into an apathy so deep and a contempt of life so terrible, that again the Maker of man must become his Redeemer. The grandeur of mankind lies in the depth and awfulness of its need. Nothing but the Highest can fill this deepest in the desolate heart of the race. Is Christ the Master of this world as He was of the smaller world in which our foreign missionary work began? Is He King of the latest as He was of the earliest development? Yes; it is all traceable to Him, in so far as it is good. Because Christ is the source of the whole better life of mankind, He must be the guide and goal of it. This is our faith. We have a Christ for the world because God made man in the image of His Son; we send the gospel of Jesus Christ to the race because He is the fountain of our humanity; we expect to subdue the earth at its greatest to Him because its latest life, no less than its earliest, is out of His eternal love.

This is our task, and we must prepare ourselves for it by a deeper retreat upon our God in Christ whom we are to send abroad. Only souls alive with the divine love can be its apostles; only churches in the joy of spiritual power can support this work. The obstructions and perils of the enterprise are so great that to insure its advancing triumph we need our best, and our best kindled from above. As in New York harbor the narrow channel from Sandy Hook is indicated by poles whose heads bear each an electric lamp, and as soon as night comes on, from the land, and not from the sea, from another world as it were, these poles are lighted, and in the thick darkness show the way to the incoming treasures from other shores, so must we secure for the gospel the way into the heart of the world. Our best men must become missionaries, and our best men must support them at home. In this double service we want men of insight, wide sympathies, large wisdom, profound views of history, and the place in the economy of Providence of the

whole imperfect but exalted religious tradition of the race. Somehow the gospel must be guided into the life of the nations through the rocks and shallows of ignorance and wickedness. And again I say this must be done by the Christian intelligence of the missionary and of the church that sends him. Men of flesh and blood as we are, men of like passions with the rest of our kind as we cannot but be, yet must we be men of inspired intelligence, men whose heads carry the lamp of life, whose reason is lighted from another world, and who supply in the gloom of heathendom the points of fire between which the power of God may be carried home. O that this illumination might be flashed from the Eternal in upon all our missionaries, upon all our ministers, upon all our churches! O that we might discover in the surrounding night a way for the Lord into the heart of these weary and heavy-laden peoples! O that it might dawn upon us, like a morning without clouds, that we have a gospel for mankind, and that we might rejoice together over the privilege of sending it to the ends of the earth! Our Lord died for the world, and in His great name, and following in His footsteps, a multitude that no man can number of every people and among every people under heaven have died for it. "Therefore, let us also, seeing we are compassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight and the sin"— the earthliness, the animalism, the greed, the godlessness, the inhumanity — "which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Out of that Majesty may we replenish mind and heart and life for a new career in this august service, and cease not until we have not only belted the globe, but covered it with the power of a Christian civilization.

MISSIONS AND THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH.

ANNUAL SERMON

BEFORE THE

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MISSIONS AND THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH.

"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto hem, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto ou, and hearken to my words:

"For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour f the day.

"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of ıy Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and our young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

"And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out, in those ays, of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy."—*Acts ii: 14–18.*

THE prime impulse to Christian missions came at the ay of Pentecost with the new and abundant life poured ut upon the disciples. To be heralds of glad tidings was ot an afterthought, not an inference, not a painful obedience to a command, but rather the very life itself, seeking he first channels of expression as the floods in springtime ıake their triumphant way to the sea. It required no aruments to induce the first believers, thrilled with power 'om on high, to tell the wonderful works of God anywhere nd everywhere. There came upon that little company that ırried in Jerusalem in prayer no evanescent excitement f feeling, but a deep inflowing of the very life of the asended Saviour, with his abandonment to the world's salation, his forgetfulness of himself, his easy sacrifice of ll things to accomplish the purpose of his coming. And 'ith it there came his own power, now augmented in fullment of his own saying: "Greater works than these hall ye do, because I go unto the Father," and "Ye shall eceive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: nd ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in ll Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of he earth."

For the first and miraculous outworkings of this new life there was a providential preparation in the gathering together of men from all nations in the holy city. They had heard a great bell sounding out over sea and mountain and desert, calling them to hear a new message from God. Little did the remote Jews, dwellers in Mesopotamia and Egypt, dream the divine purpose for which they made their slow way up to the ancient seat of their faith. Little did the Cretes and Arabians, the strangers and proselytes, know whereunto they were called. Nor did the disciples themselves, on their knees in prayer, conceive how the Spirit was to break through the long-silent heavens and shake the very walls of the upper room where they waited, and lift them all up into a new world of light and power. But when the day came all was ready. They were harmoniously disposed in one place and the witnesses stood around to see and hear, and then return to all lands, telling how God had once more come down to men.

The message was new to mankind. It could not have been spoken by Jesus himself before he had suffered upon the cross, risen from the tomb, and gone to the right hand of the Father. All these final acts, consummating his errand, must needs have been performed before the Holy Spirit had the materials of the work for which he made his advent at Pentecost. Then, and not before, could the disciples comprehend the saying: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

The facts concerning Jesus were all freshly at hand in rich abundance, not barely and coldly received as a part of a scheme of truth, but living, organific, tremendous. The cross from which they fled in terror, the open grave to which they came in doubt, were suddenly illuminated from on high with majestic and wonderful power. They stood in the foreground with almost blinding

light, and were first to be seized upon and held up before the awakened thoughts of the people, who said to one another, "What meaneth this?" Well may we marvel and sigh as we look back from our troubled and powerless days to that atmosphere, electric and luminous, that surrounded the first disciples. They were unincumbered. They stood ready equipped for swift advances and victories in the One Name. The world lying in wickedness was not to them a problem, but an opportunity, for they had no sense of difficulty as they went everywhere in light-hearted obedience, preaching the gospel of the kingdom. Life is always conquering. It was nothing to them that they were a handful and the world vast. They did not stop to gather statistics nor ask to comprehend the immense reach and order of their tasks any more than soldiers need to know the movements of a general engagement, spread over miles of smoke and carnage; but they knew Christ was at their head, and they fell into the business before them without long delay. Time was no problematic element with them, seeing that the times and seasons were kept in the hand of the Father. The forms of philosophic heathenism, state religions, intrenched in custom and supported by the sword, were nothing to those who felt that in Christ were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and that he must reign until all enemies were under his feet.

The abundant life poured out at Pentecost made them free of the world, and simplified duty. Where now stands, in imposing outline, ecclesiasticism to be defended, developed, and pressed on the world, there was in their eyes only the form of Jesus, marred for a time upon Calvary, but again beautified and glorified in risen life. To them the Church was the place where the Spirit was, and nothing was visible outside and around to distract attention. Where two or three were gathered together in the name of the Lord there was he. It was the ecclesiasticism of the Holy Spirit, bestowing gifts of speech, government, and help as he chose. The life from above shaped and

reshaped the worship and deliverances. Precedent there was none. All was fresh, formative, stimulating each believer to the utmost use of his time, money, and gifts to the common cause. The support of the Church at home was no problem, for in their hearts there was no Church and no home, but only a glorious chaos over which the Spirit brooded, and brought forth a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Nor was the truth itself, the message to be delivered to the nations, beginning from Jerusalem, a problem in the Pentecostal times. The age of criticism follows that of life once given. Philosophic distinctions, elaborated doctrines and arguments, pronouncements of councils, defining and guarding the deposit of the faith, were as yet to come, and to come of necessity as part of that age-long and world-wide advance of the body of Christ under his guidance. And yet nothing essential to the entire scheme of truth, in all its later developments and applications, was wanting to the first morning when the fire of heaven fell on the praying company in the upper room. Nor was this all. Power — divine, incomparable, justifying itself by its effects — power from on high gave the word amazing and instant influence over all hearts.

The profound change that came over these first disciples, who were baptized with the Spirit and with fire, gave a new axis of crystallization in a moment to the home, the market, and the temple. They surrendered themselves wholly to the new life that bore them on together. They found themselves throwing all their possessions into a common stock. The communistic aspects of this brief experience have been exaggerated, and they set us no pattern; but the life out of which for a time came this abandonment of worldly goods must again be poured out upon us before we say that naught which we have is our own. Through the transient mists of that early morning time we still see the true Sun of Righteousness rising on the world. Property was not so much

consecrated as forgotten in the rich gifts of the Spirit, in the pervading joy which Jesus had promised, in intercession, in power resting on individuals and companies, and securing again and again the physical signs that went with the original enduement. We might speak of sacrifices made in Christ's name were it not true that all that was done and suffered was under compulsion of divine grace, and had no marks of sadness and loss about it.

Thus the original missionary enterprise was sustained by the whole life of the Church of that hour, and was that life seeking its natural channels of expression.

The miraculous utterance of Pentecost was followed by the preaching of the laity, scattered by persecution, the apostles staying in Jerusalem; then in the church at Antioch, while they were ministering to the Lord in orderly ways and fasting, the Holy Ghost said: "Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul," who went forth, commissioned both by their brethren and by the Spirit, to be supported by the prayers of all, and to return and give an account of their journeyings. But in each stage we mark here the same supervising and creative presence of the Spirit, working his will in the whole body of Christ.

As we gather now to consider the one great service to the world which we are endeavoring to render, what is the message of the hour? Let us hear in deep silence of soul what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Let us unite in humbly summoning him to this assembly, so that when we depart we may, with reverence and faith, take up the bold words of the early Church when they assembled together and say, "It seemed good unto the Holy Ghost and to us." Let us ask ourselves, in view of the magnificent work done within this century in making Christ known to the whole world, in view of doors open as never before to the gospel, in view of the steady growth of the visible body of Christ in numbers and wealth, and in view, alas! of the straits we are in, what is our first, our greatest need? And, unless we have mistaken the signs, we shall see as we sit

from day to day together in heavenly places in Christ, and are surrounded by witnessing spirits of those, now ascended, who once bore this work on their hearts in love and prayer, that, as the missionary spirit and success sprang out of the full-orbed life of the early Church and involved the whole of that life, so today the proclamation of the gospel to the world must be made by the whole Church and by the whole of the Church, and that such unity and power must come, as at the first, from on high, in measures of still greater abundance than were seen at the morning of Christianity.

It is not the first time that themes kindred to this have engaged the attention of the Board at its annual meetings. Twenty-four years ago, at New Haven, our beloved and lamented Secretary Clark, whose apostolic presence was itself a benediction, presented a paper upon the "Ministration of the Spirit," in which he said: "The moral elevation of a fallen spiritual being is the problem of history; the solution of this problem, the end of the divine economy of providence and grace. The agencies needed for his redemption and for the development of his spiritual life must come, not from the world below him, over which he was to have dominion, but from above; not from mere education or culture, but from the inspiration of a new life from God."

Five years later, at Providence, our Secretary Alden, who has so recently passed to his reward, and whose tender and entreating tones linger in our memories, presented an inquiry, "Shall We Have a Missionary Revival?" "Has the period arrived," he asks, "when, all else being subordinated to this controlling idea, we may look for that full outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the churches which shall be directed mainly to the widespread propagation of the gospel of Christ among the unevangelized nations?" And he adds: "Not by a few select instruments, unattended, is the kingdom of our Lord to advance to its greatest triumphs over sin and Satan, but by select instru-

ments supported by the great mass of Christ's disciples—by select instruments who are but channels of that mighty divine Spirit who is dwelling in the whole sacramental host as one body."

Nor have we been left unfamiliar in these meetings with the fact that periods of great aggressiveness in the Church have been those when the Spirit has been poured out upon God's people, and the life from on high has been true to itself and become a spirit of missions. In other words, just so far as the Church has been Pentecostal has it been missionary. It was so, as we know, at the first and in the first three centuries, when the whole Roman Empire, fifteen hundred miles north and south, and two thousand miles east and west, was evangelized. It was so at the Reformation, when the pure gospel was preached and sung into the hearts of nearly the whole of Western Europe. It was certainly so at the opening of this century, when revivals blessed the land and various boards of missions took form. Indeed, the modern era of world-wide evangelization may be said to have begun with the revivals under the Wesleys and Whitfield, and more specifically with the great essay of President Edwards, "An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth." He rests his appeal on the proposition that the latter-day glory will be unspeakably great.

And if we review the history of missions themselves we shall see that they have closely followed the lines laid down by the Holy Spirit, and in constant, humble dependence upon him in prayer. The very fire from heaven has touched solitary souls with a sudden glory; and we see a Goodell leaving the farm in Vermont, and carrying his trunk upon his back as he walks over the hills to Andover to prepare himself for the grandest tasks; we see Harriet Newell laying down her young life on the Isle of France; we see the anointed group around the

haystack at Williams College. Again and again has the Spirit breathed upon churches and they have sent forth their choicest young men and women to the ends of the earth, and upon assemblies of the Board, when, for a time, all hearts have been made one, gifts have been lavished upon Christ, and the walls of the Heavenly City have gleamed through the mists. The abundant life from God flows into the life of a man or a woman, and where we ordinarily see it as a thin stream, limited and ineffectual, again it gains a mighty ascendency and bears everything along. Then those who are alive unto God are brought out into the open with him and all mankind. They are baptized into a sense of all conditions. They are swayed by universal obligations, and are free to take up impossibilities. Their work has all the originality and boldness of the first days of the faith. From such souls a decree goes out that all the world shall be taxed — the world of nature, of science, of wealth, of human confidence and love. However obscure for a time their tasks may be, they do not despise the day of small things, and whether they live or die they are the Lord's. They open continents with Livingstone; they turn multitudes to righteousness with Titus Coan; they translate the Bible into the language of millions with Dwight and Riggs; they stand before kings with Cyrus Hamlin; or they move as angels of mercy among the starving and dying with Grace Kimball and our whole band of heroic missionaries in Armenia.

Missionary enterprises have always been full of divine interpositions, special guidances of the Holy Spirit, for which the Book of Acts gives us the pattern. With the moderate forces in the field and the imperfect support given them, such wonders have been wrought that the best defense of missions is their history. It would be difficult for an honest skeptic to read the simple story of the lives of a score of our Christian heroes in far-off lands and not fall down to worship the living Christ, who has been faithful to his parting promise, "Lo! I am

with you alway, even unto the end of the world." No cry comes from our brethren and sisters abroad, begging to return from unsuccessful labors; no note of failure reaches us from the hardest fields, since God Almighty has set his seal royal upon what has been done already; and the burden is rolled back upon the churches at home of showing cause why they should falter at this crisis in the moral history of the world.

As every feature of the personal Christian life is involved in the production of one missionary, so the whole life of the churches together is bound up in the sending forth and sustaining of the missionary who has heard his personal call. Before Timothy was ready to accompany the great apostle, his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, must have prayed over him and consecrated him to his service; and before Paul could go forth in obedience to his summons from on high, the believers in Antioch must minister to the Lord and fast, and then set him apart for his work and sustain him on his journeys by their prayers and gifts. The Church, being the very body of Christ, receives direct impulses from him now as at the very first, and if the avenues of this heavenly power are closed by unbelief the whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint.

But with a great portion of the household of faith, even today after so long a time, is it not evident that missions, in the broad sense, including all that is done in the city or country, in home land or foreign land, that missions, I say, are essentially foreign to the general scheme of life; that this is especially true of foreign missions; that a special conversion to them is too often needed; that they are a sort of *addendum* in popular regard to the ordinary and just claims of Christ; that they bear a small part in the education of children, in the scale of home expenditure, and in the activities of the churches? The missionary concert, which should be the most kindling and uplifting hour of the month, too often

falls upon the few to support or is abandoned for its incorrigible dullness. The Week of Prayer, which was born in the hearts of our brethren in India, and commended to the whole Christian world as a time of seeking an outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh, has been given up by many, or limited in its scope to local needs, or made an atonement for eleven months of spiritual barrenness; while others would have it lapse into the order of the liturgical churches, and so lose its original character altogether. It is not too much to say that the prevailing type of revivals in recent years, so far as they have been known, has discredited them in many sincere minds as being too superficial. And so we take up the strain of one of our hymns and cry:

"O for that flame of living fire
That shone so bright in saints of old!
Which bade their souls to heaven aspire,
Calm in distress, in danger bold.

"Where is the spirit, Lord, that dwelt
In Abram's breast and sealed him thine?
Which made Paul's heart with sorrow melt,
And glow with energy divine?

"That spirit which from age to age
Proclaimed thy love and taught thy ways,
Brightened Isaiah's vivid page,
And breathed in David's hallowed lays?

"Is not thy grace as mighty now
As when Elijah felt thy power?
When glory beamed from Moses' brow,
Or Job endured the trying hour?"

I have thought that there are certain correspondences between the condition of the primitive believers, after the ascension of our Lord and before the day of Pentecost, and that of the Christian world today, on the eve, let us pray, and as many believe, of a vastly greater Pentecost, when the dream and the vision shall return, and all shall prophesy, and the glory of the Lord shall

cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. For, in the first place, in those days of suspense and expectation there was a full knowledge of all the facts concerning Him whose voice had just left its melody upon the air, and whose words and works were an abundant possession. But these facts were not assimilated, and they could not be used in effective testimony, as they came to be after the power from on high was given. And so within the past century there has been a wonderful renewal of acquaintance on the part of the Church with the earthly life of the Son of man. The subtle and vigorous attacks of Strauss, sixty years ago, called out manifold lives of Christ, until today few homes are without one or more of them. Photography has made our eyes familiar with

> "those holy fields,
> Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,
> Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed
> For our advantage to the bitter cross."

Art has become the handmaid of faith and gained her noblest inspirations from gospel scenes. Discovery has confirmed ancient records or changed former conclusions. Upon the text and substance of Scripture a world of patient study has been lavished, giving us almost a new Bible. The watchword of apologetics has been "Back to Christ," and it is well, provided we do not go too far back and fail to see the whole Christ. For we must move on from the earthly to the heavenly, from the Man of Galilee and of Calvary to the Man at God's right hand, to whom all power has been given in heaven and on earth, the Man whom Stephen saw and whom Paul saw, and who said: "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you. He shall glorify me."

Thus in countless ways the figure of the Christ has grown familiar, and we are tempted to say, "We know." And so we do. But knowledge is not all. It is not the

chief thing. We are not able to assimilate what we have been gaining, nor to adjust all the elements of the new learning, nor see eye to eye in our various approaches to final truth.

Who shall sift out the true from the false, the transient from the everlasting? Before the eye of the scholar all stands in rich but distracting confusion, and meanwhile there are too many deaf children sitting in the market place. Suspense brings weakness. Reconstructions leave no strength for aggression, and we wait eagerly for one clear voice to say, "This is the way; walk ye in it!" It will not come from man. Like the first disciples, before they heard the sound of a rushing mighty wind and bowed their heads to receive the fire from heaven, we must wait together in prayer, feeling our needs and believing that God who can satisfy them will surely do so, and that we, with all the Church of today, shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

You are familiar with the story of the visit of St. Thomas of Aquinum, a Franciscan monk, to Pope Innocent Fourth. As they sat together, large quantities of gold and silver were being carried by servants into the papal treasury. The pope, with some satisfaction, said, "You see that the Church need not say now, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "Yes, holy father," said the honest monk, "and the day is past when she can say to the paralytic, 'Take up thy bed and walk.'"

But in the days after the ascension and before the descent of the Spirit the company of believers could not heal the sick, nor cast out devils, nor preach the gospel to the world of Jew and Gentile. The truths to declare, they were at hand; the person of Christ, he was near them; the word of command to go and make disciples, it had come and with it a promise of blessing; but they must tarry, in acknowledged weakness and ignorance, in united prayer.

And so the whole Church today, while possessing measures of the Spirit, yet faints for a new manifestation of Him who is the promise of the Father, another potential and spiritual coming of the Lord, which shall not prelude but rather make way for greater and greater comings until all be fulfilled.

The chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales this year struck this note: "We cannot pretend," he says, "that the Church is telling on the world as it ought to. We are filled with a divine discontent. There is something missing. We are great in all the accompaniments of religion, but the tone of religious life is low. God and fellowship with God are ceasing to be pathetic needs; the prayer meeting, which used to be the thermometer by which we measured the temperature of the Church, is fast becoming a tradition, and the ideal Sunday service is getting to be that in which the music and the æsthetics of worship are perfect and the sermon not too long."

Look at another feature of the present times of suspense and nervelessness. Everywhere we are told that the merchant must apply the Sermon on the Mount to his business, and that the statesman must carry it into the affairs of the nation; the rich into their dealings with the poor, and the poor into their feelings toward the rich. But we are bewildered in making applications of these principles. The good that we would, we do not; and the evil that we would not, that we do. It is precept upon precept and line upon line of the social *law* of love without any mixture of the social *gospel* of love. In some teachings the kingdom of heaven is set over against the Church, like the Israelites of old upon Ebal and Gerizim, and the Church takes up the curses in the antiphonal service. Now, I ask, whence must come the enlightening and comforting and enabling word but from the Holy Spirit poured out in abundance again, solving for us the question of the Christian attitude

toward grave social problems, and taking us all up into one great purpose to make Jesus king?

The primal days of the Church give us the only true note of unity, the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. That blessed unity was begun but not perfected in the days before Pentecost, and it will come to us only with life from on high. Everywhere there is a deep and genuine longing after the oneness for which our Lord prayed; and while we say, with profound truthfulness, that all believers are the same at heart and that the walls of separation are crumbling, we learn how stubborn those walls are the moment we attack them. They will never go down of themselves, and they will stand a long siege. But as Sherman's march to the sea left a mighty fortress useless by occupying the very territory it protected, so the triumphant movements of the Spirit, in answer to prayer, will turn the divisions of Christendom into monuments of a forgotten past. And let us remember that the unity will come with a great missionary revival, in a life poured out, which will show itself in utterance, in free giving, in intercession, in original modes of service, in a movement along the whole line upon the kingdom of darkness, in which the various divisions of the army of the Lord will blend into each other. It is not a question of Christendom alone. At the World's Congress of Religions the gifted Miss Josephine Lazarus, a Jewess, said with prophetic eloquence: "The times are full of signs. On every side there is a call, an awakening, a challenge. Out of the heart of our materialistic civilization has come the cry of the spirit hungering for bread, the bread without money and without price, and a thirsting for living waters, of which, if a man drink, he shall never thirst again. What the world needs today, not alone the Jews who have borne the yoke, but the Christians who bear Christ's name and have built up a civilization so entirely at variance with the principles he taught — what we all need, Gen-

tiles and Jews alike — is not so much a new body of doctrine, but a new spirit put into life, which will fashion it upon a nobler plan and consecrate it to higher ideals and purposes. Christians and Jews alike, have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Once more," she pleads, "once more let the Holy Ghost descend and dwell among you as it did upon your holy men, your prophets of the olden time, lighting the world with that radiance from the skies, and so make known the faith that is in you, for by their fruits ye shall know them."

Such, fathers and brethren, are some of the points in which the entire Church of today may be compared with the disciples who gathered in the upper room to wait for the promise of the Father. *Then* there was more knowledge than vision; there was love without channels of expression; there was a great command without impulse and force to obey it; adequate means and messengers, if only they could be discovered.

And so it is with us today. But with them there was continuous and expectant prayer to the ascended and adorable Saviour, who was watching them with infinite love, bending over them in blessing, bearing their feeble petitions up before the Father, and only withholding his greatest gift until he saw that it could be received.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Board has never been placed in so trying a position as today by the churches sustaining it, despite the favorable showing on the treasurer's accounts. There have been other times of financial depression and scanty offers of service; there have been grave problems on the field; but we are far down the ages now, and the world is open as never before, and our success makes the demands vaster and more pathetic; while the strength of the churches increases, and the responsibility rests heavily upon us. Ordinary appeals, devices to secure money, while they are blessed in giving temporary relief, do not reach the seat of the trouble. We have sent out

but one male missionary at our own charges since we last met, and we have made our accounts balance by reducing the work itself. Why, then, should we not use this great gathering to promote the spirit of prayer for a new Pentecost — for one more great and universal approach to the days of which Joel spoke, when "the Spirit shall be poured out upon all flesh," when the sources of benevolence shall be flushed with life from above, and men and women offer themselves in numbers commensurate with the opportunity and the needs of the world?

The posture is not one of weakness, nor of despair, nor of abandonment of labor, but of solid and delightful hopes; for men fail, but God lives, and from him there must come to us blessings in our own sphere of labor, and the privilege of entering those greater moral movements which lay hold on generations of men. An inflow of life from above will bring a tireless courage and hopefulness, even against the sense of personal unfitness, against the opposition of evil, against the inertia of others around us. And when we have reached the place where we expect nothing from ourselves, and where we expect nothing of others to whom we go, and where we see that all our sufficiency is of God alone, then he will come and fill us with that living water which shall flow through us out unto others and gladden the desert places.

"This is that," said Peter to the astonished multitudes in Jerusalem. We can almost see the sweeping gesture with which he utters the sublimely vague words that do not define, but only hint, the meaning. "This sound from heaven," he seems to say, "these cloven tongues like as of fire, this telling in many languages the wonderful works of God — all is but a sample of the last days, when it shall be fulfilled in the reign of Christ." "This is that." No! Let us be assured Pentecost did not exhaust the stellar depths of prophecy any more than one sunrise exhausts the sun! The full day is yet to come! Its light reddens the east! We are here to has-

ten it! Of every genuine work of the Spirit we may say, "This is that!" Of every marked triumph on mission fields, like that on the Sandwich Islands or among the Telugus of India, we may say, "This is that!" All shall yet be fulfilled of which holy men spake in vision, for which Christ endured travail of soul, and for which the Spirit was given at the first.

And when the day shall come, be it sudden, as at the first, or gentle and gradual in its approach, the whole Church will be one as in the days when it numbered one hundred and twenty; its prayers will be one; its gifts will flow like rivers; and it will go forth to disciple all nations, chanting its morning song!

THE COMMISSION OF A RECOVERED LIFE

ANNUAL SERMON

BEFORE THE

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS

DELIVERED AT

NEW HAVEN, CONN., OCTOBER 12, 1897

BY THE

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THE COMMISSION OF A RECOVERED LIFE.

"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep."—*John xxi: 17.*

PETER has attained his spiritual majority; his freedom birthday has dawned; from henceforth he will ever prove himself a man in Christ Jesus. The adolescent period of his Christian experience has been italicized by all those inevitable struggles between impulse and intention, passion and purpose, which, while fought to a finish in every life, in some are forever making conspicuous and humiliating exhibitions of the immature and unbridled spirit itself.

Peter, whose brave feet could walk the water, but from whose fickle spirit the boisterous winds so speedily blew away the faith; Peter, whose hand so resolutely found the sword hilt for the Master's sake, but whose heart was so intermittent in its action; Peter, whose lips were embarrassed now by the amplitude of a great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," and now by the pollution of a great denial, as complete as it was cowardly, "I know not the man;" Peter, on whom were bestowed the most gracious assurance and the most withering rebuke the Master ever uttered; Peter,

> —"that brave, weather-beaten Peter
> Whose stout faith only stood completer
> For buffets; sinning to be pardoned"—

Peter has recovered himself, established himself in the affection of his Lord, and is about to re-enlist in His service.

The freedom gift of the risen Christ to His humbled but delivered disciple was the revelation of the efficacy of a personal attachment, and the working power of a great love. The thrice pressed question, "Lovest thou Me?" the thrice affirmed consequent, "Feed My sheep," had for their unveiled interpretation that Peter's personal love for his Master would be the inspiration of the arduous toils of the coming days, and the compensation for his expenditure of labor and of life.

Peter's subsequent life is entirely distilled in the alembic of his personal love to his personal Lord. His passion no longer flames fitfully, but burns with the white light of resolute and considerate purpose. His spirit is no longer gelatinous: he fears God so much that he has forgotten to fear the face of man, and boldly proclaims into unwilling ears the resurrection truth. His horizon broadens; a Gentile becomes precious as a Jew; his faith deepens; the darkness of a dungeon cannot disquiet it; the lashings of a jailer cannot beat it away; his labors become more abundant, his life more intense, his love more profound; his ennobled manhood, his enlarged conceptions, his unremitting toils, his confident assurance, all repose in the arms of that masterful love, which, during that conversation after dinner by the shore of the restless sea, has been given to him by the Lord.

The old world to which this evangel of the energy of a living love was being carried, was not without possessions; it had its noble cities in which could be found many illustrations of an exquisite civilization; its libraries were well furnished; its cloaked philosophers had the respect, at least, of the noble spirits; its religion was ample in ritual and elaborate in ceremonial. It appeared like a prosperous world. It really was wretched.

> "Like ours it looked in outward air,
> Its head was clear and true,
> Sumptuous its clothing, rich its fare;
> No pause its action knew.

"Stout was its arm; each thew and bone
Seem'd puissant and alive —
But ah! its heart was stone
And so it could not thrive.

"On that hard pagan world disgust
And secret loathing fell.
Deep weariness and sated lust
Made human life a hell."

To this world so despairing and so barren came the inspiring evangel of a personal Redeemer for personal souls. Brought by uninfluential, unlettered men, whose only credential was their own experience, it began its preposterous undertaking of winning a world by love. The quickened hope, the lofty scorn of suffering, the chivalric confessions, "I am a Christian," the sermons, passionate in their proclamation of a God-man who craved the love even of the despised, caught the ear, the eye, the heart of the despondent world and sent thousands of converted heathen singing the spirit of their heart faith.

"If Jesus Christ is a man —
And only a man — I say
That of all mankind I cleave to Him
And to Him will cleave alway.

"If Jesus Christ is a God —
And the only God — I swear
I will follow Him through heaven and hell,
The earth, the sea and the air."

This patent and indisputable fact that the splendid energies, noble consecrations, and glowing assurances of early Christianity were the emanations of personal love to a personal Lord, is matched by another equally significant fact; namely, that when other influences were permitted to eclipse this original one, it was no longer noonday; twilight with its deepening shadows, midnight with its black darkness, shrouded the faith itself, and only when a new return was made to that primal faith did the morning break and the shadows flee away.

The Missionary Society whose anniversary we celebrate

tonight is an illustration. It was born in the bright morning of a quickened faith, when personal love to a personal Lord was finding a lavish expression in eager quest of unprivileged souls. The thick crust of formal and arid religiosity had been burned through by the hot fires of aroused conscience and committed love. There was a great awakening. A revival spirit was abroad. Many a recovered Peter hearing his Lord's incisive question, "Lovest thou Me?" had made his reply, "Thou knowest that I love Thee," only to receive, with a startled spirit, the explicit command "Feed My sheep." And because the "other sheep not of this fold"—the heathen—were realized to be included in the great command, therefore the consecrations of love drove him to their succor, not merely because they were as sheep having no shepherd, but because they were sons of God and his brother-men, whose souls were of infinite worth, and to whom he was commissioned to carry a gospel of salvation. But the driving power was a recovered sense of personal obligation to a personal Lord. The great endeavor was the accentuation of great love. It is, therefore, not without propriety that an effort may be made tonight to emphasize anew this familiar, historic but essential truth. The characteristic of our modern world is amplitude; men eagerly swing in extended orbits; they chafe within limitations; they dare great things; they expect great things; they realize great things. The pass-word of the generation is "progress:"

> . . . "progress, man's distinctive mark alone.
> Not God's and not the beasts'. God is, they are,
> Man partly is and wholly hopes to be."

However cruelly yesterday's "pent-up Utica" may have contracted our powers, we are today well on our way across the "boundless continent!" Emerson's confession, "Things are in the saddle and ride mankind," has not yet entirely lost its pertinence, in these days of complacent congratulation that the great world spins "forever down

the ringing grooves of change," and that "through the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day." The tonic of the modern spirit is the elixir of progress, and no more dreary prospect could be held before a virile soul than that of a home in a stagnant world; we glory in our wonderful modern movements because we believe them to be explicit testimonies of the fact that God is in His world, and because we find in them the prophecies of those swelling hopes whose realization is both the prayer and confidence of trustful souls. But every age and movement, as well as every man, has the defects of its virtues and needs for its larger furnishing the recovery and the supplement of truths eclipsed. Truth perceived must first be adjusted to truth proportioned, before it can exert a constructive influence, and so it is that, as Prof. Alexander V. G. Allen has finely said: "Progress might be almost identified with an even deeper penetration into the old truth and its richer appropriation." One great business of the twentieth century, so daring prophecy affirms, will be taking from the waste-basket of the nineteenth truths and ideas which in the carelessness of haste have been thrust therein, and this will be not the contradiction but the confirmation of progress. Certainly it is true that in our modern world the tendency has been for the particular to be overshadowed by the universal, the personal by the human, and the individual by the race. These overshadowing truths are necessary and essential; they shine today because they themselves were shadowed yesterday; they can never again be ignored; but just as Clerk Maxwell declared with relation to theories of the universe that they needed a God to make them workable, so must these truths, so capacious, so luminous, enlist in the service of the particular, the individual, the personal, because only thus can they really evidence themselves.

Your idea of God may be distinctly more worthy than that of your grandfather two generations ago; it ought to be; you may discern as he never did how

"Little things go on lessening, till at last
Comes God behind them."

Or the converse truth may be to you a familiar conception:

"God dwells in all,
From life's minute beginnings up at last
To man."

But you do not therefore make God real to men, nor in fact to yourself. Professor Royce introduces a chapter in his new book entitled "The Spirit of Modern Philosophy," by calling attention to the fact that "certain stages of growing intelligence and even of growing spiritual knowledge are marked by an inevitable, and at first sight lamentable, decline in apparent depth and vitality of spiritual experience. . . . We become more knowing, more clever, more critical, more wary, more skeptical, but we seemingly do not grow more profound or more reverent."

One may, in the congenial atmosphere of his great ideas even of God, be compelled to acknowledge the impotence of his lifting power in the world and find his counterpart in that "drudging" student who

"Trims his lamp,
Opens his Plutarch, puts him in the place
Of Roman, Grecian; draws the patched gown close;
Dreams 'Thus should I fight, save or rule the world!'
Then smilingly, contentedly, awakes to the old
Solitary nothingness!"

It is not by the "grandeur God" but by the "comfort Christ" that men are made to feel their immortality or to long for a divine companionship!

When Seneca's plaintive entreaty is heard in the midst of the despair and anguish of our present-day life—"ah! if some one would but stretch out a hand"—then every proffered assistance mocks the entreaty, till some one whose God ideas have incarnated themselves in Christ can supply the personal appeal, with the testimony of a personal Christ. This is, as we have so recently been told, the real gospel for an age of doubt! "Lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep!"

If we glance at the social idea the same truth meets us, for all efforts for the amelioration of social conditions must be realized through uplifted personal lives. Carlyle's ringing challenge to all the lords and magnates of London, by combined effort to make one little bootblack happy for one short hour, has not as yet been accepted, because even the London lords know that however delightful and favorable the environment about the bootblack may be, the entrance to the abode of his happiness is faithfully guarded by his spirit, which is not sure to be amenable either to their authority or to their appeals. The bootblack's character cannot be gauged by the bootblack's comfort, and his character is the key to his true happiness.

It is only with most earnest sympathy for and with all methods of social reconstruction that the position is urged that they are inefficient, till they realize themselves in character. It is admitted, with the French anarchist, that "a little roast beef goes well with the bread of life," but the contention is that these twain are not identical. You must get your man; you have not found him when you have covered his body with clothes or lined his stomach with crackers! It is said that yesterday's world was so busy saving souls that it had no time to save men and women! The stricture has its modicum of truth, but it may be met with a counterfoil, for are there not evidences today that some are so busy saving men and women that they have no time to save souls? And is there not, at least, a suggestion of truth in the keen remark of the aged theological professor that, judging from sermons he had recently heard, "the main business Christ came upon into this world was to teach improved cooking and a better system of drainage!" Not that these things are unimportant. Would to God every workingman were properly fed and his house properly drained; but this granted, you have not saved your workingman more than your bootblack! The recovery of the individual is becoming today the seri-

ous concern of the social reformer. He, too, is hearing the eager, direct question "Lovest thou Me?" and is receiving His explicit direction "Feed My sheep!" The depth of his love is coming to be recognized as the measure of his real efficiency in ennobling the race, because it is recognized as the register of the zeal with which he will seek for lives. The beginning of social reconstruction is the salvation of souls!

Foreign Missions stand for the extension of Christianity; in principle they differ in no respect from City or from Home Missions; they represent the widest possible application of the teachings of Jesus, and are the exponents of the splendid inclusion of that gospel which can only be satisfied through universal proclamation. They command the loyal and sacrificial allegiance of those who have come near enough to the Lord to hear like Peter His eager question, to affirm like Peter the soulful faith, and to receive like Peter the personal commission. Great endeavor here as elsewhere is the accentuation of great love, and springs from the recognition, seen anew in the command of Christ, of the value and worth of a solitary soul.

Our own history should make us enthusiasts for Foreign Missions! You have only to read the opening chapters of any English history to be reminded that we were heathen of a very crude and fleshly type. It may be that now, as we speak of the educated people in non-Christian lands, we should refrain from referring to them as heathen, and address them in some more complimentary fashion; but so far as our own ancestors are concerned, we need have no compunctions in this regard. Surely and unmistakably they were heathen! They were gluttons, drunkards, pirates; they delighted in carnage and in blood; they were cruelly ferocious and heartlessly pagan; so that when we read of Hengest and Horsa turning the prows of their two-sailed barks toward the Isle of Britain, and landing with their butcherly and bloodthirsty warriors at Ebbsfleet, almost instinctively our

lips move in sympathy with the conquered islanders, and we pray the ancient litany, "Lord deliver us from the fury of the Jutes!"

But now a swift century hastens away, and to that very Ebbsfleet sails another craft; it brings not pirates, but priests. The missionary, the foreign missionary, has come to heathen England. There is a formal reception by the king, a little procession of Christ-conquered monks entering Canterbury, bearing for a banner a picture of Christ, and for insignia a silver cross, chanting their plaintive litany, "Turn from this city, O Lord, thine anger, for we have sinned," to which their inspiring antiphonal responded, "Alleluia!" This was the Saxon's Christmas; the birthday of his Christ; and all the wealth of his civilization, his arts, his literature, his commerce, his superlative power in the world is to be traced as directly to that Christ-bringing ship as the light of the world is to be traced to the sun! But the passion which brought those monks over the snow-capped Alps, and across the billowy channel, was kindled by that love to Christ which revealed to them a brother even in the alien Englishman! Surely it is not a symmetrical Christian today who can appreciate his own ancient history and can sense his own modern opportunity, glorying in the one and denying the other!

Personal experience is another great tributary of Foreign Missions. To have been met and mastered one's self by Christ is to have entered upon the appreciation of Christ's great ideals, and into the ambition of His world-conquering spirit. It was this which made the young monk Savonarola, knocking at the door of the monastery of St. Dominic, plead that to him might be assigned the most menial drudgery, that he might not be transferred merely "from an Aristotle of the grove to an Aristotle of the cloister"; it was this which made over the wealthy, society-loving, careless Hannington, into the consecrated, devoted and life-giving missionary bishop; it was this which gave the crippled Stott his heroic ambition to go to China, and

which prompted the laconic reply, when asked why he, a cripple, should undertake such adventure: "Because I do not see men with two legs going, I think men with one leg ought to go." One may well question the depth of his love for Christ who finds the breadth of his sympathy of meager pattern, or the compassion of his soul unmoved by the contemplation of the struggling quest of others for the peace, the rest, and the hope which to him have been freely given by a gracious Lord. One of our famous poems is based upon the following story: A physician is writing to his master, Abib, from Bethany, concerning a strange medical experience. He has met one Lazarus, who, having been evidently the victim of a prolonged trance, claims to have been raised from the dead by a Nazarene physician whom he regarded as no other than God Himself. Karshish cannot accept this testimony, but sends it to his master as an item of interest to a medical man. He apologizes for having introduced the incident so improbable, makes voluminous report concerning specimens he has secured and remedies he has found, but as he concludes his letter, his willful mind brings him back again to the improbable story, and in the almost fever of a longing heart, "breaks out at last in the agitated appeal to Abib and the truth:"

> "The very God! think, Abib; dost thou think?
> So the all-Great were the all-Loving too—
> So through the thunder comes a human voice
> Saying, Oh heart I made, a heart beats here!
> Face my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
> Thou hast no power nor mayst conceive of mine.
> But love I gave thee with Myself to love,
> And thou must love Me, who have died for thee!
> The madman saith, He said so; it is strange!"

Where is the Christian soul enshrining the precious jewel of its love, which does not long to find both Abib and Karshish, and bring to their eager, questioning, hungering spirits the glad, glad truth that the "all-Great" is the "all-Loving" too?—that the "madman" was not mad; the strange confession a real experience! Where is the

Christian soul which, realizing that Karshish and Abib live not in an ancient but in a present-day world, that now, this very hour, there are millions of them, unsatisfied, unenlightened seekers after the all-Loving God, does not feel the stirrings of a bounding impulse to minister to these, as he has ability, of his own cherished faith, and of the knowledge and love of his own Eternal Christ!

The opportunity for one's personal love to his Lord to find its world-wide expression is the very embarrassment of faith today. Existing conditions at the dawn of modern missions were to it surely as "moonlight unto sunlight, or as water unto wine." The world whose areas were so vast, and whose corners were so remote, has become very small; the telegraph has annihilated distance; the greyhounds of the sea have in marvelous fashion economized time. Christians today travel for a summer's vacation to lands whither, a half-century ago, the missionary went, never expecting, from sheer distance, to return again; a common language, our own English, is taking possession of the world and in the near future is to be the universal tongue. The press is the medium of exchange of the ideas of the world; commerce is making old worlds familiar and revolutionizing their habits and their civilizations by its thrifty and not always honorable transactions; old and hoary faiths are comparing their possessions with others, and are rousing themselves for final engagement of victory or defeat. A great spirit of inquiry is abroad and as never before the burning question rises—

> "Where tarries He, the Power who said,
> See, I make all things new?"

And the answer to the question is in the keeping of that race, the adoption of whose language, the projection of whose great ideas, the march of whose commerce, and the expanse of whose colonies, all prophesy that into her charge is to be given the responsibility, at no distant day, of the conduct of the world. The Saxon has been made by his religion; he has today the opportunity by it to make the

world! And we are members of this race! Our missionary institutions enhance our Christian opportunities. They have been planted at a great expense of time and of money; they are strategic in location; they are acknowledged as mighty powers. Our hospitals, healing the sick; our colleges, educating the aspiring; our churches, holding forth the word of life, are today the hope of struggling nations, and the horror of those whose selfish cupidity would hold these peoples in barbarism, in ignorance, and in awful servitude.

Dean Ramsay, in his recently published "Impressions of Turkey," gives point and emphasis to this suggestion. The good Dean confesses that he began his observations of Turkish affairs with strong prejudice against American mission work, but acquaintance with the missionaries in the personnel, spirit and purpose of their lives, a new conception of the forces not altogether Turkish arrayed against them, a revelation of the obvious triumph of their work, caused him entirely to change his attitude from prejudice to admiration. "In spite of every obstacle," he says, "the mission grew into one of the greatest and most beneficent organizations that have ever been elaborated by private enterprise and skill. Robert College in Constantinople is the central point and I think the earliest, and I firmly believe that Robert College has done more to render possible a safe solution of the 'Eastern Question' in European Turkey than all the ambassadors of all the European Powers have succeeded in doing to render the solution difficult."

Robert College lays deep foundations for national reconstruction because it builds upon character renovated and renewed by the saving power of the Master; it is a bright beacon in that dark and dreary land, because it shines with a borrowed light, and honors as its illuminating power the Sun of Righteousness. It is but one — a type of all. Our missionary institutions of manifold variety from kindergarten to publishing house; from nurses' training school to theological seminary; from mission hall in the country to

spacious church in the great metropolis, are each in their sphere holding forth the Word of life and laying the foundation for a reclaimed society by the lifting of individual souls into the light of God!

Nor can the inspiration of missionary example be overlooked in any estimate of the opportunities for the expression of one's personal love through high-souled endeavor! The staunch loyalty of early Christians in troublous times, which drew to their fellowship those who were hitherto alien, is reproduced today in the lives of our devoted and heroic missionaries; in the midst of India's famine, of China's scourge, of Turkey's atrocities, they walk as angels of light; the women pure and fearless as Perpetua; the men chivalric and steadfast as Polycarp; hampered by constraining and imperative mandates from the authorities at home, surrounded by the unusual and crying urgency of appalling conditions; their own scanty support first diminished by an enforced reduction, and then shared with unprecedented generosity with the needy about them; the efficiency of their work crippled; the burden of it mightily increased; they reveal their thorough mastery of the lesson Ignatius taught the martyrs when he counselled them to "stand firm as an anvil when it is smitten, since it is the part of a great athlete to receive blows and conquer!"

The missionary witness of loyalty to a great love, of fidelity in cross-bearing, of patience in irritating circumstances, of enthusiasm in difficulty, of fearlessness in danger, of utter Christ-devotedness, has surely in the history of modern missions had no more explicit and emphatic illustration than that which at this very hour is manifest to any discerning spirit. The home church needs no spur with which to prod her sons and daughters on the field; she has her hitherto unfulfilled task of keeping abreast them, fellowshipping their sufferings, sharing their burdens, equipping their endeavors, through a virile sympathy in spirit and purpose, and an adequate appreciation of the proportions of their world-saving work.

"I have learned," said a scientific student preëminent in his specialty, for years a skeptic, then a trustful disciple, "I have learned that it is Christianity or nothing." "It is," affirms our own Dr. Behrends, "Christianity everywhere or Christianity nowhere." The missionary living in the continual presence of decaying faiths sees this. He knows it; he knows, too, the tremendous import of the next half-century of the world's life. He further knows that the leaven of Christ's Gospel is already working in the world-meal, and that the loyal love which feeds the sheep today makes precious contribution to the coming of the kingdom. Here is the challenge to the Christian Church. Here is her unparalleled opportunity. At her door is laid the great responsibility. She will open her eyes, untie her purse-strings, engage her best energies, as she uplifts the simple truths of her supreme Gospel and from the spirit of a deep love feeds the sheep.

We are dreaming today of the possibilities which might be realized if Christ should come again, where He would go, what He would see, and what His comment would be on our modern Christianity. Indeed, then, has He not come? Are we still orphans? Has He never whispered to a nineteenth century Peter, "Lovest thou Me?" Are Christians today denied His fellowship? Is there no open vision? Oh friends, Christ is not dead! He lives! He is not abroad; He is here! In His world He organizes and advances His kingdom. In His church He feeds the fires of spiritual life. In His disciples He wakens deep and soulful purposes as He bids them exploit their love in sacrificial ministry. To their hearts He whispers glorious hopes, while to their lives He commits toilful tasks. The world belongs to Him. Surely will He conquer it. And His companions in victory will be those brave spirits who in unfaltering allegiance have partaken of His love and have shared it with others.

"Lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep!"

"I say to thee: Do thou repeat,
To the first man thou mayst meet
In lane, highway, or open street —

"That he, and we and all men move
Under a canopy of love,
As broad as the blue sky above;

"That doubt and trouble, fear and pain,
And anguish, all are shadows vain;
That death itself shall not remain;

"That weary deserts we may tread,
A dreary labyrinth may thread,
Through dark ways underground be led.

"Yet if our Guide we will obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way,
Shall issue out in heavenly day;

"And we, on divers shores now cast,
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
All in our Father's home at last.

"And ere thou leave him, say thou this:
Yet one word more — they only miss
The winning of that final bliss

"Who will not count it true that love,
Blessing, not cursing, rules above,
And that in it we live and move.

"And one thing further make him know:
That to believe these things are so,
This firm faith never to forego,

"Despite of all which seems at strife
With blessing, and with curses rife,
That this is blessing — this is life!"

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BY THE

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THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HATH ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR." — *Luke iv: 18.*

CHRISTIANITY is a vast missionary enterprise. There can be no more accurate, more fundamental, more exhaustive definition of it than this. The earth is the great mission field of the Triune God. The Father so loved the world that he sent his Son to be its Redeemer and Saviour. The Son volunteered to veil divinity in humanity, and to die that man might live. The Holy Spirit is ever active, pervading the appliances of the gospel, and supplying the divine energy necessary to sustained effort and final success in the merciful and measureless undertaking.

This is the view suggested by our Lord's action and utterance in the synagogue at Nazareth, on the threshold of his ministry. He indicated his desire to read the lesson and teach, and, according to custom, the roll was handed him. It was the book of the prophet Isaiah. Jesus opened to what may have been the lesson of the day, and read: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, . . . and sat down," to deliver his sermon. The substance of that sermon was, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." Thus he declared himself to be the sent of the Father, and the anointed of the Holy Spirit, to proclaim good tidings of compassion and consolation, of light and liberty, to the poor and the broken-

hearted, the blind and the enslaved, the world over and the ages through. And thus he stands before us the model Missionary.

THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS IN THIS MISSIONARY WORK. This is the theme, suggested by the attitude and teaching of our Lord, to which attention is invited. If the Master needed this divine anointing, then do his disciples. The phrase "missionary work" is here used in its broadest, which is also its truest, sense. The term has acquired for us a restricted meaning. It usually refers to some special department of Christian effort, as distinguished from the "regular" work of the church. So we are under constant temptation to surrender the conception of Christ's work in the world as a grand unity, and to lose the realization of our responsibility for every part of it. One great need of the church today is the conviction that God's redeeming work in the world is one, and that every disciple of our Lord is responsible, according to the measure of his ability and opportunity, for its prosecution in every department of its vast field. Not to the apostles alone, but to the five hundred men and women assembled to meet him on a mountain in Galilee — representatives of the discipular brotherhood in all succeeding ages — did the risen Lord say, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This command of Christ is upon every disciple. If we are his, we are the bearers of his commission. Hence we need, as he needed, the anointing of the Holy Ghost. And we may have it. There are many things of much account in rendering one's life useful, of which all men are not possessed, and which they cannot acquire — such as classical culture, social position, large wealth, abundant leisure. But the divine anointing, with its endowment of spiritual power, which more than all things beside qualifies us for efficient service, is within reach of all.

An intelligent conception of its nature, and of its place in the Christian equipment, may stir us to seek it, and will aid us in securing it. What, then, is this divine anointing? What is the truth embodied in the word of Isaiah here appropriated by our Lord, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me?" Consider the answer to this most important inquiry:—

I. AS INDICATED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES. The prophet Ezekiel has a striking allusion to the "anointed cherub of Eden" by which our thought is carried back to the opening pages of revelation. It would seem to suggest, what I believe to be the fact, that anointing is coeval with sacrifice, and was practiced on the same authority. The divine origin of sacrifice is not recorded, but it must be assumed. Only thus can we rationally account for the fact that blood sacrifices have been offered from the time of the fall of man. And if this is true of sacrifice, we may assume that it is also true of anointing, for it is certain that they run parallel through the Patriarchal and Levitical dispensations. Thus Jacob pours oil on the stone which he has set up for a memorial, and it is with him obviously a common and customary rite; and specific and repeated directions are given concerning anointing in the Mosaic ritual. These references to the subject, and the prominent position which it holds in the old economy, suggest that as sacrifice pointed forward to the mission and work of the Divine Son, so anointing was designed to prefigure the ministry and operation of the Divine Spirit.

In the typical dispensation there was a threefold use of anointing: (1) It was the seal of consecration. By it Aaron and his sons were set apart for the priesthood. Thus also the tabernacle and its vessels were consecrated. By this seal they were separated for the service of God. A sacred character was imparted to them. (2) Anointing was the ceremony by which those chosen to certain

offices were inducted into them. Thus Elisha was installed in the prophetic, Aaron in the priestly, and David in the kingly, offices. (3) Anointing was the symbol and pledge of divine qualification for the office into which one had been inducted. The reality of the divine help thus symbolized is illustrated in the history of those called and set apart.

Thus anointing appears in the preparatory dispensation. But here we have only the type, the shadow of better things to come. The truth acquires an infinitely higher and more spiritual significance as we grasp the substance in the discoveries of the New Testament. Look at the import of the divine anointing: —

II. As revealed in the life of Jesus, the Christ. The Holy Spirit came upon him at his baptism. "John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven, like a dove, and it abode upon him." "And Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil." After his return, while again on the banks of the Jordan, John proclaimed him to be "the Lamb of God," and two of his disciples followed Jesus, and had an interview with him. One of them was Andrew. "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" — that is, the Anointed One. "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee." Our Lord's interpretation of all this is given in the text: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel." This aspect of his mission was clearly apprehended by his apostles. Peter and John, liberated by the Jewish authorities, return to their own company, and all engage in prayer. In the course of their plea to the Father they refer to the Son as "Thy holy servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint." And Peter, in the house of Cornelius.

begins his discourse by appealing to the fact, as one well known to all the disciples, that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power."

Now what was this anointing to and in him? It was just what had been indicated in the type:

1. *The anointing by the Spirit was the seal of his consecration.* He set himself apart that his people might be sanctified. This quality of his life is most important, and ought to be kept steadily in mind. How frequently he refers to it himself! It is expressed in his first recorded utterance: "I must be about my Father's business." To the perplexed disciples at the well in Samaria he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." When they found fault with him for healing on the Sabbath day, he answered, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is yet day." Praying in the upper room he declares, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." And agonizing in Gethsemane, he cries, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." The consecration of Jesus was perfect, and he received the Spirit without measure as its seal.

2. *By the anointing of the Spirit he was inducted into his threefold office, as Prophet, Priest, and King.* These three offices never inhered in one person in the typical dispensation. This peculiarity was reserved for the period of fulfillment and realization. It is one mark of the superiority of the substance over the shadow. They all meet in Christ. He is our anointed PROPHET. His word is sufficient and supreme. "These sayings of mine" form the firm foundation of character. "All things whatsoever I have commanded you" constitute the sum of Christian teaching. He is our anointed PRIEST. "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore, he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." He is our anointed

KING. He sits on the mediatorial throne. "Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

3. *By the anointing of the Spirit he was qualified for the discharge of the functions of these offices.* We are here in presence of the mystery of Christ's person. He was the Son of God, "the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance," the equal of the Father and the Spirit. But in the incarnation he "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." The mystery may be inexplicable, but the fact is clear. Jesus Christ accepted our human conditions of service, and wrought only in the same power as that which was to be the strength of his Church — the power of the Holy Spirit — as prophet: "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God, for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him; as priest: "Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God;" as king: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom: Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Such was the anointing of the Holy Spirit as realized in the life of Jesus. All the types and shadows of the old dispensation are fulfilled in him, and all God's revelations of spiritual truth find their center and culmination in him.

We are now prepared to consider the import of the Spirit's anointing :—

III. AS UNFOLDED IN THE PROVISIONS OF THE GOSPEL. As with the Head, so it is to be with the members. We are to follow Christ and to be like him. His gospel

provides for this. We are to be one with him in *life*, as the life in the vine and the branch is one. One with him in *motive:* "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Note the words: "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me." Not a modification of it, but the same. Limited in quantity, it is true, but of the same nature precisely, as pure and unalloyed as the Father's love for the Son. This is the great impelling motive of the Christian. One with him in *mission:* "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." One with him in *experience:* When the Master spoke of his approaching sufferings and death, Peter rebuked him. Jesus set the rebuke aside, declaring that the experience of the cross was not for himself alone, but also for every disciple. It is the only way to the crown. One with him in *glory:* "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him." This is the great salvation provided for lost men. It is not merely escape from hell and entrance into heaven. These ends are incidental and subordinate. It provides for the creation of a new man under the ribs of death, makes us partakers of the divine nature, and lifts us up with Christ into the remedial scheme, making us, according to our measure, remedial forces working with him to save the world.

For this high vocation we must have the anointing of the Holy Spirit. In us, as in our Master, it will be:

1. *The seal of consecration.* This is the root of all true life and living. For, in the pursuit of eternal life, he who reserves aught has surrendered nothing. This because God wants the man, and not his possessions merely. And where the man stops short in his consecration the supremacy changes sides. That with which he cannot part holds

the real mastery of his life. It marks the limitation of faith and the restriction of obedience. Neither faith nor obedience is real if they fall short of a full and complete surrender to God. The Holy Spirit will not put his seal on a partial surrender. Entire consecration to God is the imperative condition of the divine anointing.

2. *By the anointing of the Holy Spirit the believer is inducted into the same trinity of offices as his Lord.* He is called, as we have seen, to be a prophet, a teacher, a co-worker with God. He is commissioned by his Lord to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth. He is called to be a priest. He is to "present his body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God;" to make intercession for others, which is the privilege only of those who are themselves right with God. He is called to be a king; to keep his body under, to have the mastery of self, to triumph in Christ. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; *for when he is tried*, he shall receive the crown of life." We are not to be made kings by being crowned, but crowned because we are kings, and have vindicated our right to the title.

If now the question be asked, as it well may be, "Who is sufficient for these things?" we find relief as we turn to the remaining point in the analogy between the experience of Jesus and the provision for his followers:

3. *The anointing of the Holy Spirit qualifies the believer for the discharge of every duty.* The Spirit in him becomes his guide into all truth. He is the Spirit of supplication, and under his gracious influence we shall be enabled to pray in the Holy Ghost. He is the indwelling, abiding Spirit by whose power we shall overcome every difficulty, conquer every foe, be equal to every task. He will help our infirmities and enable us to be prophets, priests, and kings in the earth.

Finally, look at the import of this divine anointing:—

IV. AS ILLUSTRATED IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

John the Baptist proclaimed: "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." This prerogative our Lord did not exercise during his personal ministry on earth, a fact which left his followers substantially on the plane of the Old Testament dispensation, the only difference being the advantage of his presence and teaching, and the latter was dependent for its efficiency on the Holy Spirit of promise, who was to teach them all things. On the evening of the day on which he rose from the dead the risen Lord made himself known to his bewildered disciples, and breathing on them said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." This, however, was not the fulfillment of John's word, for weeks afterward he said to them: "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

The record of the fulfillment of John's prediction — the promise of the Father — is found in the second chapter of the Acts. Our Lord had ascended from Olivet, and his disciples had returned to Jerusalem. With the great promise of their Lord before them, they had little time or inclination for any other service than that of prayer. They did not waste the golden hours in useless discussion as to the right interpretation of the Master's sayings, or in speculation as to the future of his kingdom. And it is registered in letters of everlasting endurance — a record, surely, for all times of division and discord — that the most glorious manifestation of the Spirit of God yet vouchsafed to the world was afforded to a company of humble and unpretending believers, whose special distinction it was that they were assembled with one accord, and in one place, praying and waiting for the Holy Ghost. The answer came suddenly and was attended by startling demonstrations. "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit." This brought them up to the experience of their Master. This baptism was the inauguration of a new era in the spiritual life of

man. And it is a fact of deep significance that this beginning of the realization of gospel power was marked by UNIVERSALITY and FULLNESS. They were ALL FILLED — the women as well as the men, the humblest disciple as well as the chiefest apostle. The fountain-head was a sea. To be filled with the Spirit is the privilege of all believers. Listen to Peter: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out, in those days, of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. . . . For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." So of the Gentiles Peter says: "The Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning." And Paul exhorts the Ephesians to "be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit."

Now mark the effect of this anointing of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples. They had received much prior to this. They were the "friends" of Christ; their "names were written in heaven;" they were "clean through the word;" they were "not of the world;" their Lord had breathed on them the Holy Ghost. But all this was not enough. There was something larger and richer in reserve for them. Our Lord had intimated what this was, in the upper room: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth *with* you, and *shall be in* you." The Holy Spirit dwelling in the believer is the peculiar glory of the Christian dispensation. This was needed by the disciples to qualify them for the work that lay before them. Hence our Lord "commanded them that they

should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father." And added, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Now what were some of the elements of that "power" which they received with the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and without which they might not proceed with their work?

1. *Clearer spiritual vision.* All that had heretofore been done for these disciples did not preclude great dimness of spiritual apprehension. They knew not what spirit they were of. They did not understand their Master's teaching, nor the nature of his work and of the kingdom he came to establish. Even the great teacher himself was unable to penetrate through the dense blocks of Jewish prejudice, and open their eyes to spiritual things. This continued down to the hour of the ascension. We are amazed that they could be with Jesus and yet so entirely fail to understand him. They were wholly unfit to be witnesses for him. But they are "filled with the Holy Ghost," and all things that Christ has said are brought to their remembrance. They are enabled to grasp the spiritual import of his teaching, and there is no more blundering. So it was with these disciples, and so it is still. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. If we would apprehend them we must secure the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Without it much of the Bible must remain to us a sealed book. Until we receive it we are not qualified to be witnesses for Christ.

2. *More consistent Christian character.* In their previous lives there were some things that would seriously impair the force of their testimony. Instability, — they all forsook him and fled, and Peter denied him with oaths; selfish ambition, — the sons of Zebedee hankered after the chief seats in the kingdom, regardless of the rights others might have; vindictiveness, — some of them would

call down fire from heaven upon a Samaritan village simply because the people refused to entertain Jesus; intolerance, — John saw one casting out devils in Christ's name, and he forebade him, because he did not follow with them. Christ said, "Forbid him not." The power to cast out devils is the divine authority for the doing of it. These disciples were not perfect men after the anointing, but all such gross evils disappear. This was necessary in order to successful witness bearing. So with them, and so with us. Consistency is power.

3. *Nobler moral courage.* They greatly needed this. They were timid men — utterly unfit to face the difficulties and dangers involved in their mission. But with the anointing of the Spirit came the requisite courage. They were transformed. Contrast the Peter of the Court of Caiaphas with the Peter of the Pentecostal pulpit, — the cowardly denier of his Master shrinking before a servant-girl, with the fearless preacher of the crucified and risen Lord facing the Jews who had procured his death. Timidity is an element of weakness. We need courage to face the problems before us. We shall find it as the first disciples found it, in the anointing of the Holy Ghost.

4. *Increase of assurance and joy.* There was among them up to this time a great lack of this element of power. They were a somber group, and no wonder. They had risked everything in following Christ, which for them was an experiment; they did not understand their Master; He was not moving toward what they were looking for. But with the fullness of the Spirit all this is changed. Clearer light brings confident assurance and abounding joy. This was an element of great power in their witness bearing. We need the joy of salvation both for our safety and our service. Without it duty will be drudgery, and work a burden. The hearts of slaves are never strong. The joy of the Lord is our strength. It springs from the indwelling fullness of the Spirit.

"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." Now mark the immediate result. They "began to speak with other tongues." But this was not the great wonder of that memorable day. It was a wonder, to be sure, for the people "were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, What meaneth this?" It was a wonder, but it was not *the* wonder. There was a wonder in Jerusalem that day that stirred the harps of heaven to their highest note. It was the moral revolution wrought in three thousand converts. The plowshare of divine truth drove through their souls, exposed their sins, and forced the cry, "Brethren, what shall we do?" They were directed what to do; they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and were baptized. Mark *now* the result. "They continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers. And all that believed were together, and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them all, according as any man had need. And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people." There was a volcano of spiritual fire and love in the purified hearts of these first disciples, like that which forced redemption out of the heart of God; like that which led the majestic Son of God to the cross. There welled up in the soul of the entire mass such a devotion to God and to the interests of their fellowmen — an intensified desire to save the world — that the rush was simultaneous; they sold their possessions, "and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet," thus enabling them to continue the good work, "And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved."

Brethren, there is the pattern shown us in the mount. Is it still available? Does it meet the case as presented to us? In our prosecution of this great missionary work

ought we still to follow it? If we do, may we expect like results? Or, is it true that conditions and circumstances have so changed that we need a new pattern — new elements of power applied in new ways? Much of what we hear would seem to suggest this. We are told that there is an awakening of the keen oriental intellect, a burnishing up of ancient systems of philosophy and religion, a defiant, even an aggressive, attitude on the part of those to whom we would bring the gospel; therefore missionaries are needed of great intellectual power and high scholarship, who can meet these men on their own field, and with their own weapons. We are warned that this is a very practical age; the men in our churches are practical business men, everything must be done on strictly business principles. No expenditure is to be projected until the money needed is within reach. No debt must be incurred. And as there is a painful disparity between the funds available and the growing demands of the work, not only must new fields remain unoccupied, but the work already established must be curtailed at any cost. The order is not only to halt, but to retreat. All this may be wise and necessary under the circumstances. No intellectual power is too great, no scholarship too broad for the work of the kingdom; and its affairs should be conducted in the wisest and most businesslike way. But the fact remains that in all his instructions to his disciples, when he was about to commit his work to them, our Lord said not one word about intellectual power and scholarly attainments; nor did he once allude to the subject of money. He said to the plain men and women whom he had gathered about him, who had no splendid gifts of intellect, no opportunity to study, and no wealth, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature;" but "tarry till ye be endued with power;" and "ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." That is all. They obeyed, and were gloriously successful. They were not

intellectually confounded, nor financially bankrupted. In spite of the hatred and opposition of the Jewish hierarchy, the derision and contempt of the Greek philosophers, the licentiousness and spirit of caste of the heathen priests, the brutal despotism of the Roman emperors, and the gross materialism and utter degradation of the masses, within three centuries they planted the standard of the cross above the eagle of the Cæsars on the throne of a world empire. So has it ever been; so will it ever be. The power by which the world is to be saved is the power of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of God's people. Hear the word of the Lord: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come"—"unto you," understood—"he will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." But one thing is needful in order to put this work in which we are engaged beyond the dreams of its most sanguine friends, to give it all the men and all the money it can possibly use without its ever asking for them, to crown its efforts with glorious success,—and that one thing is the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon our churches. This God has promised and waits to bestow. How can we bring ourselves, how can we win our people, to simple surrender and earnest waiting upon God for this divine gift? That is the most fundamental, the most vital, and the most practical question that can be asked in connection with our missionary work. It claims our first and most serious attention. To its answer should be devoted our most earnest and persistent effort. The Holy Spirit dwelling in the universal heart of the Church, then compromise and compound are forever at an end. This interior divine impulse will bring her up to the help of the Lord, bearing in her open and outstretched hands her silver and her gold, her time and her talents, her colleges and her seminaries, her sons and her daughters.

It will teach her to live in a holy, unconsuming, untiring flame until the world is brought to the saving knowledge of Christ.

Brethren, let us bring this matter home to our own hearts and consciences. How do we stand in the light of this truth? Have we the anointing of the Holy Spirit as the seal of the complete, reverent, and prayerful consecration of our being to God? Or, realizing the awful disparity between our cold, half-hearted devotion and this divine standard, are we inclined to assert that such a glorious and exalted experience is not attainable by us. Let us not deceive ourselves. To form our lives after this divine pattern is at once our most important duty and our most blessed privilege. The standard is high but the provisions of the gospel are adequate. We have seen how the earliest disciples realized this blessing, and the results that followed. And that was but the *inauguration* of Christianity, the *dawn* of its glory. The Pentecostal baptism was but an earnest of things to come. And yet the Church has been satisfied that the Day of Pentecost should be only historical. She has been content to regard the second chapter of the Acts as a museum of spiritual curiosities. While the Holy Spirit was ready to come as "floods upon the dry ground," she has been satisfied that his influence should be slowly and partially dealt out, here a *little* and there a *little*. Advancement and expansion are the statute laws of the Kingdom of God. Ezekiel's vision of the waters — first "to the ankles," then "to the knees," then "to the loins," and finally a river that one "could not pass through — waters to *swim* in" — is the outline of the economy of the Spirit. The Christian world has, to too great an extent, been playing at religion. Being a child, it has spoken as a child, understood as a child, thought as a child; but the pressing needs of the world and the imperative word of its God alike call upon it, in these latter days, to put away childish things, and to become a man.

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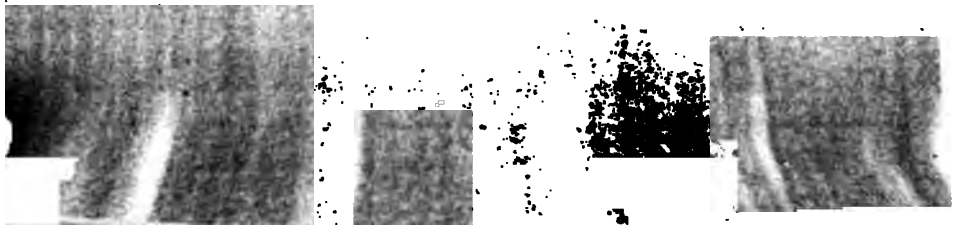

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OPPORTUNITY FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"I CAME THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE, AND MAY HAVE IT ABUNDANTLY." —*John x: 10.*

THE Holy Spirit works through human means. He comes, not at our agonized call alone, but when we have fulfilled the conditions in which it is possible for Him to reach us. Elijah was never more in earnest in prayer in his life than when he asked for translation because he was not fit to live. But even the Spirit of God could do nothing with him in that mood; it was only when the wind and the earthquake and the fire had passed over him, and his restless spirit was humbled by the mighty unrest of nature, that he was fit to hear the "still small voice." The Spirit of God had a special commission to give him, but was powerless until the prophet had risen from his hopeless pessimism, and in the awful stillness that follows the tornado his voice could be heard. The outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost was not a sudden nor an unexpected occurrence to the disciples. Not a word of surprise is expressed by them. The astonished were the unprepared; the disciples had received a training in the fifty days preceding that made them ready; they met for prayer, and with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer. They at last understood the Saviour's prediction about the coming of the Comforter, and their lives were dedicated to his service. It was not until the day of Pentecost was fully come that He appeared; and the "fully" here spoken of refers as much to the preparation of heart as to the date on the calendar. As the development of the young church went on, He still came only to those whose hearts were ready, and whose lives were fulfilling the conditions under which He could work successfully. Unpalatable as

the idea is to many, He could not come to the twelve waiting disciples at Ephesus whom Paul found, because of the incompleteness of their creed. They believed in a Saviour yet to be revealed. There was no place in that confession for the coming of the Holy Spirit. When Paul preached the gospel to them and they met the conditions, the Spirit came to them, and the usual manifestations of his presence followed. There is no variation from this law; there is a divine order in revelation to the individual soul, as much as in creation or revelation through Scripture, and no amount of prayer without preparation will cause it to vary.

The Saviour recognized this fact, and emphasized it. The disciples could not understand how it was expedient that He should go away from them, but He insisted on it. They clung to the earthly Jesus; He led them to the divine Christ. They were as lost without his bodily presence as a child without its mother, but he prepared them as a mother is compelled to for the time when they must walk without Him, relying on themselves; for that purpose they were to be better guided by the Spirit than they could be by the Master himself. So we may understand the evidences of the resurrection and the occurrences of the forty days. The appearances of the risen Christ are mysterious even now until we have the key. Two purposes were before him; first, to give sufficient evidence of the fact of the resurrection for all future use the Spirit would have to make of it; and second, to so train the wondering disciples that they would be ready to walk without His presence. That the first was thoroughly accomplished is shown by the fact that Paul, who was not born into the kingdom until long after these occurrences, is the one to gather into one statement the evidences of the resurrection, and show their cumulative force. In our discussions we are prone to give too little weight to the second purpose; a careful study of the appearance of Christ after His resurrection, with this question in mind, "What was He trying to accomplish?" reveals a pro-

gressive influence on the minds of the disciples, that prepared them for the wonderful change that came with the outpouring of the Spirit. He was leading them from the visible to the invisible. His words to Mary Magdalene, the walk to Emmaus, and the revealing through the breaking of bread; his two appearances to the disciples when the same body that bore the print of the nails and the wound of the spear had suddenly appeared in their midst, though the doors were shut for fear of the Jews; the days so spent among them that even the untutored fishermen realized that they were on the borderland between two worlds; all these things were a part of the education of the believers into the thought of a spiritual Christ, unseen, but more real to them than ever, who should be truly present to them, and whose work should go on more grandly than ever under the constant impulse of the Holy Ghost. How well this purpose was accomplished! The same disciples who fled at the arrest, crept fearfully at a distance at the crucifixion, could not believe the resurrection was a fact, and were affrighted at sight of Him, supposing it was a spirit, while they could hardly withdraw their eyes from the heavens into which He had disappeared, yet went submissively into Jerusalem, their lesson learned, and tarried there as the Master had commanded, meeting constantly for prayer and conference, until Pentecost was fully come.

In such manner Jesus fulfilled his own words: "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly." The religion of form must give way to that of the heart. The letter that killeth must break down before the Spirit that giveth life. The loved form of the Master must be so completely forgotten that Paul should be able to say, "Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more." The men and women who had been affrighted at every new manifestation of the power and glory of Christ, and had fled for their lives, were to become as bold as lions. The same Peter who had sworn that he had

never seen Jesus, was to stand in the most august presence in Judea and accuse the Sanhedrim of murder in the first degree, and men were to explain the transition by taking knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. So the expressed purpose of his coming was fulfilled upon the little band who gathered about Him in His earthly pilgrimage, and in like manner it was and is to be fulfilled through all time. Without His coming there would be no significance in the coming of the Holy Ghost, for He was to use the work that the Saviour had done, and without that work there was no means of action whatever for the Spirit. So on the human side, there is no opportunity for the Spirit until He can bring home to the soul this fact that Jesus came. Here is at once the inspiration and the method of all successful missions — the fact that Jesus came, the purpose for which He came, the abundance of that purpose. The Holy Spirit is to use these facts to inspire a like willingness for sacrifice in those to whom Christ has come. He is to carry these thoughts as basal facts to men who are lost in sin, and who can never rise above their inheritance until the Holy Spirit brings through human lips the same old story that has made this earth increasingly beautiful through nineteen centuries.

I. "*I came.*" A simple enough statement of fact, but pregnant with mighty truth. Here is a startling use of tense: "the thief cometh," "I came." The thief is always coming; the struggle is always on; but the Saviour came once. The thief comes this night, and tomorrow, and every night; but that one coming of Christ long ago has set in motion agencies that will be powerful under the impulse of the Spirit, and will make it possible to conquer the thief. The purpose is not that He shall come whenever the thief appears, but that He shall furnish the Holy Spirit the means whereby He may strengthen every man for his own great battle, and enable him to win the victory.

Why repeat this truth now? Is not the historical fact

that Jesus came admitted well-nigh universally among intelligent people? There was never a time when so large a part of humanity believed that Jesus came as just now; that name was never upon so many tongues, and never commanded so great respect. Infidelity has never had so weak a hold on the reading public. Ten years ago the writings of agnosticism were thrust before you at every turn; the train boy handed you that class of literature at the start; if that was not wanted he had something else in reserve, light literature, possibly some religious book, but not religious enough to offend any one. Now it is quite probable that the first book laid on the lap in any train will be "In His Steps." A news agent testified not long ago that it was his best selling book. Let them criticise it if they must; it is being read, and is having a mighty influence to turn the thought of humanity to the fact that Jesus came; no one can read it carefully without being impressed with the fact that His coming was of more than ordinary importance, since it has led to a story of such consecration at this distance in time. What a large proportion of the literature of the present is founded upon that coming! A few years ago we were mourning because the taste of the young turned so generally to a trashy kind of writings. It is fashionable now to read the books that are founded on the fact that Jesus came; turn whichever way we will, there is cheering evidence of the truth that every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess. We are in the midst of a great tide that is sweeping all human thought before it. Shall we not be content, and remember that the Spirit who has made such successful use of the coming thus far will carry it on to its great consummation?

But the historical fact is the smallest part of it. A large proportion of those who admit that Jesus came, see no great significance in it unless it touches their self-interest. The name of Jesus has never been on the lips of laboring men so generally as now; gatherings of workingmen have actually

cheered when that name was mentioned, and many of them have gone home to find out about Him more than they knew before. This is well, but it has been largely because He was a carpenter, and they are carpenters. Not Jesus as a Saviour, but Jesus as a carpenter, to help them to higher wages and an easier life. Now how much soever we may desire that every man may get the highest wages he can earn, and every true Christian has that desire, it was not the prime object of the advent of Jesus. When one came to Him to plead for some change in his social condition he received the caution to take heed and beware of covetousness. Strong words were spoken against the sin of acquiring for the sake of having, or of spending for selfish pleasure, words that apply to every class in the community. More than that, when Jesus touched a man he left his trade and lived by faith. Ours is an age of unrest and ambition, much of it worthy, and we believe we are on the eve of great changes, where more even justice can be done to all, but that does not warrant us in using the name of Jesus to conjure with. All this ambition, and the great uprising of humanity in every way, are due to the fact that Jesus could say "I came." But they are incidental. The truth of His coming cannot be successfully proclaimed in any place without an appreciable rising in the scale of being; but there is no promise that the Spirit will use His coming first of all to promote selfishness. Not to possess more, but to use more for blessing others, is the fruit of the Spirit. Jesus came that we may learn to forget self, and love our neighbor as ourselves.

While a great multitude are learning to have a sort of love for the name of Jesus, not many are finding what is the real heart of Christ. Though it is true that we have more books and better teaching now on the inner life of Christ, it is also true that a great multitude are satisfied with the historical fact that Jesus came. The friendship of some is one of the hardest tests of the divine force in the world. Just now there is a tendency among thoughtful Jews to admit

the excellent character and blameless life of Jesus. One public address at least, by a Jewish business man, tells how he was taught that all the sufferings of the Jews were due to the teachings of Jesus; how he was led to read and think for himself, with the result that he found that Jesus was a Jew, faithful to His people, who spiritualized the Old Testament teachings; then he thinks that Paul, without the aid or sympathy of Jesus, spread his teachings among the Gentiles. He expresses the greatest admiration for Jesus of Nazareth; and leading rabbis state that this man's view is that of many intelligent and thoughtful Jews. The chief rabbi of England lately expressed sentiments that might easily have been suggested by Him whom we Christians adore. We are glad for so much; it marks a tendency in the right direction, but as yet only a tendency; and with the intimate relations of Jew and Gentile it is a dangerous tendency to some. When intelligent Jews see that the wonderful prophecy, that "the tribe shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet till Shiloh come," was wonderfully fulfilled in the preservation of the integrity of the tribe of Judah, and the continuance of the Sanhedrim till Jesus came, and that then they were lost forever; when they see that the power of Jesus was not that He was a Jew, but that the Divine Spirit dwelt in Him, and that He was Immanuel, then the reign of the Spirit shall begin for them. In the meantime many need to study as never before the heart of Christ, and make way for the Spirit in their own hearts, lest they be drawn away by the very plausibility of the recognition of the truth that Jesus came. There are subtle forces at work; the multitude are compelled to accept Jesus' statement, "I came," but are industriously trying to admit only so much as they have to. Even the spirits are called in to help; many people who like to be called intelligent are visiting spiritualist mediums, and with wonderful unanimity their communications state that Jesus was the highest created being, or that He was the greatest man that ever lived.

Either the auto-suggestion of the medium is very strong, or there are lying spirits about.

A Voluntary Coming. However we may teach that He was sent, there is a quiet statement of fact in His words, "I came." Our own spirit of self-sacrifice will be greatly enhanced when we realize how thoroughly voluntary all His acts were. We have suffered the cross, which is the well chosen symbol of his coming, to overshadow all else. It was not the fact that He hung on the cross that gave it its significance; it was that He hung there of his own free will, in order that others might not have to hang there. "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." He had power to call for the legions of angels who were anxiously waiting for the command to rush to His help; and He had, what no one else ever had, the power to refrain from calling for divine help in that supreme hour. Every step of the way He trod was of His own choice; the first humble coming to earth and each stage of His journey through it were purely voluntary. He foretold all his sufferings and triumph as something premeditated; three times he informed them that it was predetermined. This thought grew upon Paul until he was absorbed in it; "have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant." And again, "He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, even the death of the cross." Here is the process from the time He left His throne, till the last great act of obedience was complete. Jesus, not only at the cross, but from the manger on, was an all-atoning sacrifice; and He was that all-atoning sacrifice because He chose to be.

There is a wonderful quality about the peace of Jesus which He promised to will to His disciples. Not only His calmness in view of disaster and death, but His evident looking to these experiences as a part of His own plan for

His life, in consonance with the plan of the Father, mark this peace as of a different quality from any other on earth. He is peaceful because He is filled with the enthusiasm of the greatest mission ever known. He is not startled at arrest, or trial, or execution, because He has come to them all of His own free will. The consciousness of a great duty done, a grand privilege met, makes that peace so wonderful. "I came" means the coming for one definite purpose, and all the events of the life are a part of the carrying out of that purpose. "For this cause came I unto this hour" is the key to all His words and acts. Unless there is life in Him who comes there will be nothing to impart to those He plans to save. He must have life enough to conquer death, but there must be more than that. We can be brave in view of death when it is inevitable; but Jesus was brave and calm as He planned to die. It has been recently proved that an agnostic can approach death with a great degree of calmness; but none but a God could ever come to earth for the purpose of dying, and be calm. The peace of Jesus was not the peace of enduring, but the peace of deliberate sacrifice. He went to the cross, not as many of his disciples did shortly after, who sought the crown of martyrdom with songs and shouts of joy, but with a calmness and majesty that compelled the hardened centurion who executed him to cry, "Truly this was the Son of God." The death on the cross was the culmination of the sacrifice, and his peace there was the same as it had been all along the way. Jesus was consistent from the beginning to the end of his remarkable work. The life that He came to impart is as clearly seen in each day's work and endurance as in the last. He could give life because He had life. He came to bring divine life to earth.

It is customary to dwell on the miracles in order to show His power; yet the miracles, great though they were, are only incidents of His coming. We may give them too much weight because they are miracles; in performing them Jesus

was simply himself. In discussing His power we have unwittingly allowed our enemies to draw attention from the heart of the gospel to a symptom of it. Instead of centering our attention on the fact that He came to bring life, we have been discussing the possibility of miracles. Much good may have resulted from that discussion, and incidental proof of Jesus' mission may have been drawn from it, but it is high time for all believers to learn that the real question is not whether miracles were performed, but whether He who did these things is life in himself. John's powerful statement needs careful study: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." If there was life in Him there would certainly be manifestations of the life out of the common experience of men, and that in this case makes them miracles. So our study of the possibility and the fact of miracles is only that we may learn if there was divine life in Him who performed them. When that is proved they have little further significance for us. They are only what we would expect of the Son of God. They are the acts of a loved friend, the greatest of all friends, and as such are dear to us; but they have real value only as evidence of His life. The quality of the miracles is their real power; Jesus voluntarily scattered such blessing by means of the great life He was, that wherever He went men were raised up from their weak, lost condition, and Jesus' life became literally the light of men. We say that He came voluntarily, and we have stated a great truth; but when we are able to say that He came voluntarily to bring light into darkened and sin-blinded lives, we have said a thousand times more. Just as the fact of His coming means more as we study it, so the voluntary coming grows in significance as we reflect on those to whom He came, and what was the effect on them of His coming.

The Manner of His Coming. There is no more instructive place in His life than that where we at the last find Him praying, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me

with thine own self with the glory that I had with thee before the world was." We at once ask why He has not now that glory, and the only answer is because He had voluntarily laid it aside for the sake of lost humanity. It is the grandest purpose ever revealed. Peter the Great might leave his royalty for a time in order that he might be a better king, but Jesus emptied himself of His glory in order that His subjects might become kings. He had made himself poor, that we through His poverty might become rich. And when we say poor, we do not mean poor as one of us would be; His manger cradle, His homeless life, His borrowed tomb, are incidents of His poverty, but they are not that poverty itself. As the physical suffering was the least of the agony on the cross, so the poverty in which He lived those three and thirty years as regarded home and earthly fortune is the smallest part of the real poverty He knew. There was a time in Christian development when the thought of the earthly poverty of the Master would have great weight, but we are far enough advanced in spiritual life now to know that it is only the husk of His poverty. He could not have come in voluntary poverty and not been poor in this world's goods: but His real poverty was in what He had surrendered for our sakes. And first we must learn, if possible, how deep the poverty of which He was capable. The one who has most can lose most. The poverty of one who has been rich is far greater than that of one who has never known abundance. Possibility of suffering grows with development. That wonderful beatitude, "Blessed are they that mourn," means nothing at all to the savage. Its meaning grows with the refining of the sensibilities. As the spiritual takes precedence, and the physical is overcome, that promise rises until we are able to heartily thank God for the ability to mourn. Carry the thought forward, and what was the capacity for mourning in Jesus Christ? There were never such tears as those He shed over Jerusalem. No sentence in the English or any other language contains

so much in so small compass as those two words, "Jesus wept." There was never such love as His, as He looked on the young man and loved him. Human thought is powerless to comprehend the capacity of Jesus for love, for sorrow, and for sacrifice. Then human thought is powerless to comprehend the poverty of Christ.

No foreign missionary among a degraded and savage race ever approached the condition of Jesus in this world. Sin was on every side of Him; wherever he turned the taint was in the air; every friend he had was a sufferer from sin, and a sinner. We may picture to ourselves the Black Hole in Calcutta, where into a space some eighteen feet square a hundred and forty-six British soldiers were driven at the point of the sword; we may think of the one little opening where air could come in; of the tainted air without, full of the smell of burning; we may picture to ourselves the miserable wretches crowding and struggling in their agonized fight to get where they could breathe; but we cannot for one moment by any such picturing get a conception of the absolute poverty and loneliness of the Son of God in this world of sin. If one can remember when, a pure-hearted lad, he first heard the conversation of those who could not speak without oaths and loathsome talk, if he can recall the shuddering and fear that took hold upon him, he may be able to get some slight idea of what Jesus had to endure. But we mortals become used to such things; we reach a time when we can hear an oath and not shudder. Jesus never could; His spotless character revolted at sin as much at the end of his life as at its beginning. The temptations of the forty days were only the concentrated poverty of His whole life. There is exquisite pathos in the statement after it was over that angels came and ministered unto Him; one breath of pure air in the Black Hole; one moment's respite in the poverty He had assumed. And this poverty grew deeper and deeper. He must tread the wine press alone; He must know the complete absence of all the purity that

belongs to heaven, until from His parched lips there is wrung the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

One of the principal aggravations of this poverty was that as a result of sin men could not understand the mission of Christ, nor can they yet. It grows upon us with passing generations, but it may safely be said that we do not yet grasp more than the smallest fraction of what He came to do. Even His divine patience was so intensely tried that now and then His face was turned heavenward, with exclamations on the absolute lack of faith of those about Him. His mission was misunderstood from the start. Men were looking for freedom from their most galling yoke, and that just then was Roman bondage; in their eagerness to escape from that they were ready to crucify any Saviour who did not make that his chief concern. The very disciples whom He gathered never understood Him until He was gone. Judas, in disgust that Jesus did not take the sword and the scepter, let his own cupidity have full reign, and betrayed his Master; Peter in abject hopelessness became a coward and denied Him. And even after the resurrection, when His presence was more sacred than ever, the great question that arose in their minds was, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" After the reign of the Spirit had begun, and till the present moment, men have always been ready to make the earthly kingdom their chief thought in relation to Christ. From that hour when the sons of thunder wanted to call down fire from heaven on the city that would not receive Him, to the latest diatribe in the name of Jesus against existing social conditions, men have been ready at any moment to sacrifice the heart of Christ for a little momentary gain in worldly advantage over those from whom they differed.

II. "*That They May Have Life.*" We in our short-sightedness allow our sympathy to become sentimental, and hasten to carry to others the results of life, its conven-

iences; we long to teach others the value of a Christian civilization; we would like to give them our methods, and the means whereby we have achieved success, but the teaching of Jesus is not like that. There is the same divine order in this gift as in that of inspiration. Jesus did not bring one result of the life He gives into this world with Him; they will all develop themselves in time. It is self-developing power that He bestows; all the rest will follow. No longing that others may be as we are should ever for one moment turn our attention from the one great purpose Jesus states, "That they may have life." Not method, but life; not what life has developed in others, but life in order to develop for themselves.

The World's Need. The more we study history the more we are impressed with its uncompleted beginnings. That tower of Babel, standing unfinished under the eastern sky, is a type of more things than the confusion of tongues. It has its antitype in the ruins along the Euphrates and Tigris, in the meager remains of the primitive races of Palestine, in the monuments of Egypt. History is a record of continual risings and falls; race has succeeded race, civilization has crowded civilization, and the center of light and influence has ever moved on. The Hebrew gave the knowledge of one God, and was exiled. The Greek gave one language to commerce that Paul might speak of Christ in any city in the world, and became an ancient art gallery, without life, and with no power of self-continuance. Rome gave one government, until the teachings of Jesus had taken root, and then broke up into fragments that had no resemblance to an empire. The history of the races of the earth has been a continual crescendo, ending in diminuendo. A nation has come to the front, acted its part for a little, lost its hold, and gone into desuetude, only to give opportunity for another to do the same. And all through this wearisome progress there has been an ever-increasing wail, a moaning for something that is not. Men have risen who have had a

greater grasp of truth than others, and have swayed the multitude for a time, but with their death the reflex wave has swept away their power. Pericles, who never began any important matter without prayer, was able to give Greece a golden age; while he lived Athens was great; so long as his noble purpose and strong hand were able to make themselves felt Athens was a power, but when he died the forces he had controlled broke loose, and Athens became the home of babblers and sneering philosophers that Paul found. All history is full of the thought that there are possibilities for humanity which have never been realized. Many times a race has been like Baldasarre, the old man in *Romola*, who pored over the Greek text with tears running down his cheeks, and knew he had read it once, and thought he could almost make it out, but the paralysis of power was final.

There is great unrest in this world today. In every civilized race a revolution seems imminent. Questions that will not down are making the future uncertain. That beautiful simplicity and trust in the relation of capital and labor that appear in the Book of Ruth have long been gone; we see two great factors in the world's work arrayed against each other, and sometimes it looks like a death grapple. The leading nations of the civilized world have accepted democracy in whole or in part, and with it has come the rising of the degraded classes, the education of those who will accept it, deeper thought, the desire for self-improvement, ambitions that have never been able to find such general expression before. All the pent-up forces of humanity have been let loose, and Icarus is flying perilously near the sun. On the other hand, the races that we call uncivilized are coming in such close touch with the rest of the world, that they are really a part of us. The theater of the world's action has shifted, and the far-away islands to which we used to send missionaries, with the thought that we would probably never see them again, are now at our doors. We have been pulling

out our atlases, and locating the Philippines, and Carolines, and Ladrones. China can no longer be a recluse; Corea will not again be a hermit nation; Japan is suddenly a young giant, springing up full armed, and bright with the promise of the sunrise. But through all this wonderful change there runs the discord of human selfishness. We are reminded that civilization that is not founded on eternal principles cannot stand, and ever there rises a cry for more than armies and governors can give. Unless these ambitions and longings in nations civilized and savage can be met by something more than diplomacy and force they will only end in self-destruction.

Why has the religious instinct been given, except that like all other appetites there should be an answer from God possible? He who said "Blessed are they that mourn," said also, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." From Plutarch's day to the present observing minds have seen the power and the beauty of the faculty of praise to God. But this appetite has been given in order that Jesus might have the opportunity to bestow that which He brought to earth. The world's need is not government, not armies, not diplomacy, but life. We live in the dream that a race shall arise that can not only achieve victories, but can endure success; that shall not be intoxicated with its own power, but shall see in strength a grand opportunity, and in the millions of human beings that come under its influence the greatest missionary call of the ages. Wherever we look we see a world that has made some progress and stopped, that has achieved some little success, and then lost its inspiration, and suffered stagnation. If the Anglo-Saxon race, and its mother, the Teutonic, cannot raise themselves with God's help to this height of privilege, the scepter will depart from them, and among the effete races of the East will come a stirring of the dry bones; the breath of God will blow upon them, and the true missionary spirit will assert its privilege. The world is waiting yet as it waited in Jesus'

day; and while the church disputes over forms and ceremonies and methods, and its heart grows cold, the wail of Mary at the sepulcher goes ever up to God: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." The world waits, as it has ever waited, for the living Christ.

The World's Lost Opportunities. In the story of the man who was an householder there is a principle of wider interpretation than the Jewish race has suggested; humanity has always been treating God's gifts as if they were their own, and has slain the Son when He came to claim His right. The lord of the vineyard has always been destroying the husbandmen and letting out his vineyard to others. To state it differently, the world has many times had light enough by which to find the life God had in store for it, and each time it has been placed under a measure, and its power has been lost. The study of philology has shown that at least a large part of the human race once dwelt under one roof and spoke one language, and the strongest proof of it is in the words that sprung from the religious life. God has singled out particular races and given them special knowledge, but it has been lost. Paul's visit to Athens was in her decay; Sparta had long before gained the ascendency; fortifications, religion, philosophy, were wrecked at Athens. The consecrated visitor was keen to select the most touching relic of a great past, and make it the text for the grandest address ever delivered. The altar to the unknown god was not an incident of their worship, but the poor and lonely remains of what had been the origin of their greatness. It had come to them from their ancestors, the Pelasgi, who worshiped the supreme God without temples or images, and whose altars flamed from the highest mountain tops. They even worshiped Him without a name, suggesting the unpronounceable name among the Hebrews. Zeus means the heavens. When they wished to imply a nearer relation they called Him Zeus Pater, almost identically the Saviour's expression, "Our Father which art in heaven." Here is the

beginning of Greek history, before the Doric and Ionic invasions had made confusion of thought, and the development of the commercial spirit had made men selfish. Our first vision of the race that was to give the world its best philosophy and finest art is of a simple people, kneeling under the open sky and worshiping the unseen author of their world. They kept their reverence for the unseen, but so mingled it with superstition and polytheism that all that was left when Paul came was that one altar. Instead of worship of God under the open sky there was Delphi, the mother of superstition and craven fear.

No race can be studied until we have some knowledge of its religious life. God has ordained that in the starting of a new world force there shall be the impulse of a purer worship than has been. But it is not alone at the beginning; nations have become and remained great according to the religious impulse they have received and preserved, and when that has been lost, their decline and fall have begun. English history begins at Carnac and Stonehenge. Call Druidism heathen if you will, it had much to do with the formation of Anglo-Saxon character. The civilizations of the Saxon and the Teuton are what they are today because the moral impulse with which they started was not lost in doubt and scoffing, but followed by a purer and diviner impulse that carried forward what had been fairly well begun. Too much credit cannot be given to those first missionaries who carried the religion of Jesus Christ among the races that had become hardy by exposure, and whose first faith in Christianity was as simple as that of a little child. Gibbon tells us that the civilizations of today came out of the forests of England and Germany, but they did not emerge until Christian missionaries had gone in, and Boniface had not only dared to chop down the sacred oak, but had it cut into timbers, with which to build a chapel for the worship of Jesus Christ. The history of races that have kept their inspiration shows in startling contrast those that did not. The

Pelasgi were not the only people of the olden time who had a pure worship; that of the early Persians is almost as clear as that of the nations of modern times. In fact, the more we study the races of antiquity the more clearly this point appears, that Paul was right when he said God had not left Himself without a witness. The difficulty has always been to lead the people to keep the witness after its divine impartation.

The most startling instance in all history is that which confronted Jesus at every step. The law as revealed in the Old Testament has in it all the teaching that is necessary to make men godlike. Whenever Jesus was appealed to for the heart of his teachings He went right to the Law. A modern Jew finds all the Sermon on the Mount in the Old Testament, and is astonished at the beauty and force it possesses when Jesus has spiritualized it. One thing only is lacking, and that is the life that the Saviour brought. Because of this lack men had allowed the Law to degenerate into a heavy weight, a matter of casuistry that made the people moral cowards. As a result of moral disintegration a large part of the nation had been deported, and had never come back. The rest had suffered deportation, and only through the general policy pursued by Cyrus of reinhabiting desolated lands with their own people did it come to pass that the poorest part of Judah returned and rebuilt the wall and the temple. The then modern students of the Law had added interpretation to interpretation, until a plain man had difficulty in worshiping God in spirit and in truth. Hence the surprise with which men said, "Never man spake like this man." In all human history no greater contrast could be found than that between the scribes and the Saviour. The Jewish race had lost the inspiration given them through Moses, and like other races had degenerated into a superstitious formalism. Now we know what the Saviour meant when He said, "Ye are the salt of the earth. But if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted?" Other

peoples have had opportunity; you have life; but if you lose that life there is no further hope either for you or those to whom you are sent to impart this life. The fatherhood of God has been revealed before, but men have not apprehended it; you are sent out to carry it as the Son has revealed it; you carry the means of salvation; be careful not to lose it.

The Life Jesus Imparted is a Moral and Spiritual Power. Life is more than existence. The sheep are alive; the thief comes to kill; the Saviour came to keep alive, but more than that, to lead them in green pastures and beside still waters, that their life may be abundant. Life means progress, growth, development. If the eternal life Jesus came to give were nothing more than the privilege of eternal existence we would not crave it. But "This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." So of life here; under the impulse of the love of Christ life becomes worth living. He is the moral and spiritual force that moves the world. There is deep significance in the words of the late Lord Beaconsfield, when he called the attention of thinking people to the fact that the nations that are leading the world in art and science and everything that is worth the having, are the nations where Jesus Christ is most earnestly preached and most faithfully worshiped. That great Jew had his eyes open, and did not hesitate to tell what he saw. There has been remarkable preserving and developing power where Jesus has been preached until the heart yielded. Something has been at work on these races; others have had equal opportunities; China discovered several of our most valuable improvements long before we did; with gunpowder she made nothing more destructive than fire-crackers; with the beginning of the mariner's compass she has the record of sending only one small squadron a few miles from sight of land. With the secret of movable type she printed no book. The difference between China and Germany is the difference

between a race that has no personality because it has no conception of the real fatherhood of God, and one that has a moral purpose, great and abiding. The people who gathered on the housetops at Worms as Luther went by to his great trial, and besought him to be firm, and quoted passages of the Word of God to cheer and strengthen him, had life. No uncertainty there, no wavering, no clinging to ancestral traditions simply because they are old. They were own cousins to Cromwell's Ironsides, of the same stock and with the same spirit.

This national or racial life is entirely dependent on individual life. Sociological studies have of late somewhat obscured this; we are at our old trick of inverting the divine order. We forget that when the Saviour had the opportunity of His life, as the world sees it, He deliberately turned away from the multitudes, telling them they were after the loaves and fishes, and devoted himself to training the few who were willing to give up all for Him. Cromwell had caught his method when he declared that he believed that a few honest men were better than numbers, and formed his army of a thousand who were never defeated, and who in many battles saved the day for those who in Cromwell's phrase were not so honest. We are in danger of doing in religion what we have long done in public charities, of training up a great army in the church who are there for the loaves and fishes. The part of the church that does the work, bears the burden, gives to missions, sends the gospel round the world, may all be comprehended in that not very large number proportionately who are in the church simply and solely for the life it gives. For when the life of Jesus takes hold upon a man it quickens all his faculties, clarifies his distinctions between right and wrong, stirs him up to do for others as he would have others do for him, makes him in every sense a new man in Christ Jesus. Christian philosophers in coming days may have occasion to associate in thought the increasing sluggishness in general Christian

benevolence in our day with the tendency to try to humanize the church, thereby attracting attention to the outward and visible, and losing sight of the value Jesus puts on an immortal soul. In attempting to put greater stress on the command to love our neighbor as ourself we may forget, as some so-called Christians have been glad to do, that it is founded wholly on the other and greater, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." The second commandment never can last permanently when it is robbed of its power by belittling the first. The disciples whom Jesus trained to love God first through Himself went to the ends of the earth for His sake, not for the sake of humanity; there was ever before them the fact that the Master was with them and knew their work. Paul was a debtor to all the earth because his sins had been forgiven through Jesus.

When the life forces are low, and death seems inevitable, the skill of the physician and the care of the nurse, no matter how well they are given, lose all their power; they are only valuable as aids to the life. The patient lies for weeks at the point of death; the doctors give him up; the pulse is only a slight flutter that will go out in a moment. There comes a morning when the family gather about the bed, and watch the slow, heavy breathing that does not penetrate the lungs; it becomes slower and slower; it stops; there is no pulse; the nurse says it is over. A few minutes later it is noticed that a faint breathing has commenced again; it seems a miracle, but it is a fact. The doctor says frankly that medicine has not done it. The breathing gradually gains in strength; after a day or two the patient opens his eyes and looks faintly upward; there comes a day when the nurse points out a slight appearance of returning flesh where the bones have been absolutely bare; it becomes more and more noticeable, then a slight use of the hands and arms, then of the lower limbs. It is a great day when he first sits up, a greater when he takes his first step. He continues to gain until every sense has returned in all its power, and the lad is

stronger and brighter than he was before. Scientific men say it is one of those constitutions that endure in spite of death itself. But the secret of it all is life; the life had never left the body; it conquered disease and death itself, and under its power the boy becomes a man. Now is there any point in this recovery where we dare to say that we will depend no longer on life forces, but on externals? Jesus tells us that in Him is life, and He intends us to understand that this life is to have its work even to the end. There will never be a day when we can help that convalescent by treating a class, and so expecting to build him up. The conservation of life in the one who has been sick demands all our thought. So with the soul that has life through the Saviour; the only possibility for it is the love of Christ for him, and the inspiration that Jesus has for him, that he may be the channel through which the Holy Spirit carries the glad tidings to another. Christ treated souls as individuals; the result was the grandest missionary impulse the world has ever seen.

III. And May Have Abundance. The verb here is closely associated with the fullness of the promise; "may continue to have" would be its full meaning; it is in the present subjunctive. It is a continual having, not getting nor giving, but having, and because of this having it means growing abundance. Not having abundantly, but having abundance; the word that is timidly placed in the margin of the Revised Version is the real meaning. The Saviour is promising not only abundance of life, but the abundance that goes with abundant life. It is a large promise, worthy of the Son of God. It is limitless. It is a standing rebuke to our willingness to take only salvation at His hands.

Life for Self-Purification. This differentiates Christianity from other religions. It has the power of self-development and self-purification. It is always better farther on. It places an ideal before the eyes today, and when that has been achieved or almost reached it has another a step beyond.

A Christian man becomes dissatisfied with his own shortcomings, and reforms within himself. A monk, trained in an Augustinian convent, started the reformation in Germany. The beginners in that mighty movement were in the heart of the Roman Catholic church, and obtained their education there. The Bible had found them in the course of their studies, and the Holy Spirit had made use of the same weapons He always does, with the result that their eyes were opened, and they longed for the purifying of the church. However selfish the motives of Henry VIII may have been, his reformation was a step in advance, beginning within the church, and made the way possible for the Puritan and the Pilgrim who followed. The Reformation, that was stayed in some parts of the Continent of Europe, has had its way among the Anglo-Saxons, working until now, and the end is not yet. There is iron in the blood of the Anglo-Saxon, and it comes from his belief in God and His providence. No one but an Anglo-Saxon would have thought to make the reply of Ethan Allen at Ticonderoga, when the British captain demanded his authority: "In the name of the great Jehovah and the Continental Congress." The English and American race has been moving onward in the name of the Great Jehovah for centuries, and has only just begun.

The Gaul and the Briton were one in belief and opportunity in the days of the Druids. Their difference has been the difference in their writers and preachers. Carlyle mentions as three typical names in English literature, Knox, Milton, and Shakespeare. You can almost hear Knox's voice yet in old St. Giles, and the unpretentious little piece of stone under the wheels of the vehicles in Parliament Square, with its quaint "J. K." upon it, brings up a flood of memories of him who feared neither man nor devil, but who made a queen to tremble, and who voiced and intensified all that is strong and strength-giving in Scotch belief and life. Milton, whose faith only stood out more clearly as the daylight was shut out from his eyes, our own Independent, who

saw much in God's providence that others did not, who loved the liberty with which Christ has set us free, and even averred that "new Presbyter is only old Priest writ large," who longed for the greatest growth of the Kingdom of God; Shakespeare, whose real greatness is accounted for by the fact that his writings are saturated with Scripture allusions and quotations,— these, according to an authority than which there is none better, are typical names in English literature. They dealt with the first part of the two great commandments, and the people who with them have learned to love the Lord their God with all their hearts are the missionary people of today. Voltaire took only the second half of the commandment, and, with a heart burning at the thought of human oppression, tried to teach that men ought to love one another. Paris, that applauded all he wrote, was bathed in blood as she tried to make his idea practical. He never led her one step nearer God, and so not one step nearer a real love for humanity; her mad cry of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity had no ring of the divine in it. She sang the "Marsellaise" and danced the carmagnole, but sent no missionary to an oppressed brother. The great thought of human brotherhood with God left out, that Voltaire preached, is even now showing its hollowness in the festering mass of race hatred and official corruption that stains the fair name of the republic that we dare to hope may even yet stand beside us in the effort to lead the world to Christ. Zola's great and bitter cry has gone forth, but it is a cry of despair; he sees only fate and nemesis at work on France, no divine Providence, no "God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own." His reference to Jesus seems to us impious, as he says by comparison that "Jesus was condemned but once." Was Carlyle right when he called St. Pierre's "Paul and Virginia" the swan song of French literature? No other race has ever trained such men as Carlyle named. After all allowance has been made for the rugged climate and untoward surroundings of the British Isles, it still remains true

that the religion of Jesus Christ has made them what they are. That religion will never allow them to stop in their great onward sweep toward the civilization that shall permeate the world, until He shall come whose right it is to reign.

We have been illustrating the self-purifying power of the love of Christ under the most favorable circumstances. How is it where the spark of faith is small, and may easily go out? We shudder at the cruelties of Cortez and Pizarro, who called themselves Christian, and yet in many respects were not so civilized as the people they conquered. They brought a rough gospel to the gentle races of Mexico and Peru; and the conversions of which they boasted were not much more than an exchange of idols. Yet in both these countries there has been for a number of decades a struggling toward the light, an anxious looking for something better, that presages a true Christian civilization yet to come. And the islands of the sea; how have they been brought to our very doors by the fortune of war! Some one besides the authorities at Washington had to do with the selection of the quiet man whose guns that May morning changed the map of the world. To the Roman Catholic church in the United States God is sending a challenge, and all the world waits to see her accept it; here is her opportunity; her best men are as much ashamed of the condition of things in the Philippines as we are; she has priests as pure and as consecrated as the first missionaries she sent over to this continent, and it is in her power to illustrate as she never has yet the self-purifying power of Christianity. She is being watched, to learn if she sees her opportunity, and if she does not, other missionaries will do it for her. She herself is an illustration of the fact we are discussing; her popes are a different race from those of a few hundred years ago, and in the last few weeks some hot-headed opponents of Romanism have learned to their surprise that priests may stand for law and order. So the life Jesus gives solves old problems by raising new

ones, and the life becomes ever more complex. The prayers of our fathers that the doors of China and Japan might be opened to the missionaries of Christ have been so answered that we tremble at the weight of responsibility they have laid upon us. Now we are praying that the people of God may see their most magnificent opportunity, and give the money, for there is no lack of men, and send this old world forward with an impulse she has never had before toward the millennium promised by the Master. The burden grows heavier as we go forward, as did that of the Saviour, but the same power persists to the end, with ever-increasing effectiveness.

Abundance in All True Progress. A religious motive has been under material as well as spiritual gain. This was true before Christ came; it has been doubly true since. Phidias made his best reputation in religious sculpture, and strange as it may seem to us, he worked under an inspiration that moved all Hellas. His Athene Parthenos was something more than a work of art; it meant a religious revival; it was part of a great forward movement, which was helped by Æschylus, the firm believer in the religion of his fathers, and by the pious Sophocles. Their sentiments were shared by Pericles, who, in spite of his philosophy, and of immorality tolerated by the religion of those days, publicly and in his own house zealously offered sacrifices to the gods, and was constant in prayer. If men could be so moved by high and holy motives when as yet there was no great personal revelation of God, what should we expect when the opinion of Socrates was verified that if sin was to be eradicated, one of the gods must come to earth to attend to it? The coming of Jesus Christ marks the beginning of the world's best growth in everything worth having. That wonderful speech of Paul on Mars Hill was epoch-making. The sneering audience of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers was doomed as the speaker crept down from above the cave of the furies, with a man following him who should become the bishop of the Christian

church in Athens, and seal his devotion with his life. Epicurus and Zeno must give way to Plato and Aristotle, whose philosophy the religion of Jesus Christ could take and irradiate until it should become the basis for the grandest thought in modern times. Christianity conquered Greek culture; the conquered, as has so often been the case, in turn became the victor, and the thought of personal allegiance to Jesus was overshadowed for centuries by the effort for intellectual grasp of divine truth. The age of creed-making has not been as Christian in its spirit as it might have been, but the fact is apparent that when the truth as it is in Jesus began to take hold on human thought it brought out the greatest strength the intellect has ever shown. The world's intellectual giants have been developed in the effort to wrestle with the unrevealed.

Literature has shown the impulse, and that which lives has the coming of Christ behind it. Such themes as were sung by Dante and Milton would make any writer great. Canova said of Pauline Bonaparte that with such models journeymen could make statues; with the thought of human sin and misery, and divine love shown in salvation, any writer must become eloquent. How thoroughly this has been felt is shown in the strength of English literature. One of its best illustrations is Ruskin, whose beauties are those of that grandest of all Saxon books, the English Bible. His mother taught it to him until it became his very life. Read any of his writings with this in mind, and one soon learns the strength of the writer and the reason for it. If you want contrast, try the lectures of the great agnostic who recently dropped out of this life, and see how absolutely barren human speech can be made by eliminating the gospel. The taste of the people is being rapidly cultivated for reading that has this foundation. A large part of the fiction of the present is founded on the fact that Jesus came, and on the incidents of that coming. The Holy Spirit is making even the enemies of Jesus to praise Him. When the leading

dailies of a city begin to publish the Sunday school lessons with comments for teachers each week, and many of the Sunday editions are printing more each year that tells of Christ, we see that every force may be made subservient to Him, and we learn the abundance of His power. That which is true in literature is still more apparent in art. Art before He came made beautiful faces and perfect figures. After His coming artists began to try to paint and chisel the godlike into the human visage. The paintings in all the great galleries that challenge attention of the multitude, those that command the highest prices, are those in which are the forms of Jesus and His disciples. Artists have wrought till human strength gave way in their effort to paint the face of Jesus; none have ever succeeded, and none ever will in this life; He can only be reproduced faintly in the countenances of those who love Him, but the artist has been glorified in his attempt at the impossible, and the yearning of the heart to know and recognize that countenance has given the world the richest and best it has had.

When we come to sociology we at once run into the pessimism of men who have not read comparative history, or have read it with strong prejudice. The laboring man never stood so high in the scale of being as he does now: never had so many privileges, never lived so well, never received so good wages; this is not saying that he receives all he ought to have, but that he is nearer to getting it than ever before; and with all this he has never had so great and worthy ambition. The Spirit of the Master is at work on human minds and hearts. The world has never before seen so large a class of manly and able workingmen as the locomotive engineers that brought us to this meeting, and the motormen and conductors that take us about the streets. Even the bootblack is an artist now, and no ordinary boy can take his place. Humanity has been rising from the foundation up. With it there has been a notable improvement in the condition of the poor. At the beginning of the

Christian era the population of Rome is estimated to have been 2,000,000; of these 10,000 constituted the nobility; 1,000,000 were slaves, not all of them degraded; 50,000 were foreigners; the remainder constituted the *plebs urbana*, who were absolutely destitute. Come down to the days of Queen Elizabeth, and historians say that one-fifth of the population of all England were paupers. At the present time General Booth, after the most careful research, going through London where crime and poverty are massed, when he had placed matters at their very worst, can only talk about the submerged tenth. If these figures stand for anything they mean that the Holy Spirit is lifting humanity in the name of Christ faster than we realize. Nineteen-twentieths slaves and paupers in the best city of its time, reduced in sixteen Christian centuries to one-fifth of the best nation of its time, and that in three centuries more reduced to one-tenth in the worst place in that nation. Now we can see what Jesus meant when He said that He came that they may have abundance.

This Abundance is to Come by Inspiration. Those who work in the name of Jesus have just one power that others do not possess; they have but one; it is important that they recognize the fact. If the church gives herself to acts of charity as a business, she wakes suddenly to find that the newspapers have taken it up, and can raise more in a day than the church can in a year, and gloat over it. If she grapples with questions that have to do with human conditions, she finds herself only a small part of the great number that are wrestling with the same, and soon, in their desperation at want of success. they are blaming her for not immediately solving the whole vast problem. And so on with the great round of practical applications of the spirit of love to modern problems. The late Dr. Dale was right when he said that the mission of the church ends with being inspirational; but we must not forget that his was an inspiration that inspired, even to parliament. The church has

not yet successfully devoted herself to both inspiration and method. One or the other always suffers, and it is usually the inspiration. The power Jesus has given His church is that of going to the human heart, and so filling it with the longing for His presence that it will turn to Him whose it is by right, and give Him the opportunity for which He waits to make that soul Godlike in power over self, and in love for all humanity because of love for Him who died for humanity. When a soul is thus illumined and inspired it will find its own method.

Nothing ever moves a man so completely as to learn that you are trying to give him spiritual power. He will be grateful if you feed him in his hunger and clothe him in his poverty; but soon he will blame you if you do not continue to do it. But when you lift his soul out of the mire and let the love of Christ fill it, he never ceases to be grateful. Only one mortal had any power for good over Alcibiades. That gifted and dissolute young man thought the whole world came only to flatter and cajole him in order to get something from him. He learned after a time that Socrates wanted of him only one thing, and that was his immortal soul. He listened, became interested, tried to grasp his thought, and the time came when with hot tears he admitted that a life that Socrates did not approve was not worth living. Men sneered as the handsome young courtier and the ugly old philosopher went by, and attributed their friendship to vile motives, but the confession of the young man was deep and sincere. Socrates lacked only one motive to have made Alcibiades one of the world's greatest characters. That was the one Paul and Silas hurled at their jailer when the prison at Philippi was shaken: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." That motive brought Dionysius the Areopagite down from Mars Hill, while his brother philosophers sneered; it transformed the brutal jailer into a man all love and sympathy. That motive turned the world upside down, by the confession of their

enemies, wherever the disciples went. That motive has been the lever by which humanity has been lifted thus far. We live in treacherous times; the results of Christianity are before us; we see their value; we are surrounded by the seen as never before; this means that the unseen is not so real in our thought as it was once. Mr. Gladstone has well pointed out the fact that the meaning of the modern word "altruism" is really a perhaps unconscious borrowing of the results of Christianity, without realizing the power that has produced them. We are in the same danger in our thought of missions for the whole world. Oh! for one hour of that terrible reality in the conception of a world lost in sin that sent the first modern missionaries on their long voyage to their life work, that filled the treasuries and girdled the earth with prayer. Our fathers had enough power to pray open the long-shut doors of China and Japan. Have we enough of the same kind of power to make their people glad their doors are open? We as missionaries are not to enter these doors merely in order that the people may have the blessings of civilization that we have, but that they may have the inspiration that gave us those blessings, and that then they may go to work in the power of Christ's love, and develop beyond what has yet been seen. Not the result, but the power, is what the world needs; it asks bread; we must be careful, or we shall give it a stone. The blessings of civilization without the love of Jesus will prove only a means to greater sin and misery. Without the spiritual impulse we shall give only our most harmful vices.

When Raphael died there was an unfinished picture on his easel. It represented the Transfiguration; the Saviour and His three disciples on the top of the mountain, at the base the dumb demoniac child whom the scribes had brought that they might win a triumph over the followers of Jesus. The picture was incomplete, but it was Raphael's, and one of his best. It was placed beside his body and carried in the funeral procession. It was too precious to be allowed

to go from Rome, and was never placed beside its companion picture, the Resurrection of Lazarus, by Sebastiano. It was significant; the great painter had caught the thought of the story; his untimely death had emphasized it. The wondering disciples on the mount had not apprehended the purpose of the transfiguration; they only wanted it to last always; but down in the valley was the demoniac boy. The question for them and for us is, can we get enough inspiration on that mount to cast the devil out of the boy at its base, or shall we get only sufficient to make us appear ridiculous in the eyes of the enemies of Christ? How often the disciples have been able to receive only sufficient to make them want to stay always on the height? But that is not the divine plan. We have misunderstood the inspiration; we have belittled it; we thought the divine intent was that we should be at peace above this world of woe, when it really is that we shall plunge into the life below with the story of a life unknown before, with a power that shall put to flight the devils that haunt human hearts. Under the name of Christian we have given currency to the idea that the physical healing of that boy is the great thing to be desired; we spend millions on societies to care for him after he has been plucked out of the fire; we start rescue stations to pull him out of the water; we fail to realize that our mission is to cast the devil out of him. There he writhes, and there comes to us the patient voice of the Master: "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." We had thought there was some other way; we had wondered that we could not do it. Our transfiguration, like Raphael's, is unfinished, and the boy waits, and the devil tears him, and casts him into the fire and into the water; and the enemies of the Master sneer at our incapacity. And we are intent on staying with Christ on the mountain, so intent that none of His wonderful inspiration becomes ours. He sighs as He heals him Himself, and we wonderingly ask, "Why could not we cast him out?" All we can do is to bring

Him to the boy, or the boy to Him. Shall we ever learn the conditions under which that Spirit that dwelt in Him will take up his abode with us? Until we do, our efforts will be lame and our longings unsatisfied. We have to learn that the power of the Spirit can be ours only when we are willing to meet God's conditions.

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